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Isaiah 56-66 : prophecy or apocalypse? The nature of the eschatological beliefs of Isaiah 56-66 and the investigation of the problem of its unity within the rest of the Isaianic corpus.

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Isaiah 56-66: prophecy or apocalypse?

The nature of the eschatological beliefs of Isaiah 56-66 and the investigation of the problem of its unity within the rest of the Isaianic corpus.

Nikoleta Dafni

A thesis submitted to the
University of London for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

King's College London

December 1997

Corrigenda

- p.13 note 42: for Cambrigde read Cambridge
- p.16 line 1: for refering read referring
line 8 from bottom: for hevenly read heavenly
- p.24 note 40: for Pearson's read Pearson
- p.30 note 114: 4th line from end: for dust those read dust of those
- p.32 line 8: add it after Isaiah 56-66
- p.33 line 10: add inverted commas at end of sentence.
line 17: delete the before Persian
- p.34 line 12: for disapointment read disappointment
- p.35 line 8: for its place read his place
note 133: for Greespoon read Greenspoon
- p.36 line 2: for in the destruction read for the destruction
- p.37 line 5: for showed read shown
- p.39 line 5: for serves as transitional read serves as a transitional
- p.73 line 5: for of a scribe read by a scribe
note 264: 4th line from bottom: for Earlist read Earliest
- p.81 note 281: line 2: for demonstrate read demonstrated
- p.85 note 301: line 3: for חלך read הלך
for היה read היה
- p.86 line 5 from bottom: delete second the
note 302: for comentators read commentators
- p.93 line 8: for not do destroy read not to destroy
- p.111 line 3: delete no before room
- p.113 line 8: for Briggs, Driver, Brown, read Brown, Driver, Briggs; similarly on p.292
- p.114 line 2: for made his death read made his grave
- p.116 line 10 from bottom: for murderess read murderers
- p.136 line 5: delete to before His law
- p.157 line 18: for תיבותיה read תיבותיהם
- p.171 line 10 from bottom: for which is close read which is a close
- p.189 line 2: for possess read possession
- p.206 note 26: line 1: for potrayed read portrayed
- p.240 line 10 from bottom: for take read takes
- p.144 line 5: for that it is called read that is called
- p.252 line 6 from bottom: for testifies for read testifies to

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the eschatology of Isaiah 56-66.

The introduction of this thesis challenges P.D. Hanson's view that Isaiah 56-66 is an early apocalyptic work because its eschatology is an "apocalyptic eschatology" which reflects an inner-community conflict (in the period of the Second Temple between visionary and bureaucratic elements), and, being contrasted with the "prophetic eschatology", is pessimistic and concerned with an other-worldly order which will be fulfilled outside history.

The comparison of the material in Isaiah 56-66 with the material found in the apocalyptic works shows that Isaiah 56-66 shares with the apocalyptic literature common eschatological beliefs and like the apocalypses it is the product of the tendency of the study of the scripture. However, the eschatology hardly characterizes the variety of the concerns of the apocalypses which are not only the revelation of the mysteries of the future, but also of the past, the heavenly world, and the earth. Furthermore, the literary form of Isaiah 56-66 does not fit that of an apocalypse. Therefore Isaiah 56-66 is not an apocalypse but it is apocalyptic in outlook. In subsequent chapters this thesis proceeds to argue that Isaiah 56-66 is a pseudepigraphic anthology (collection) of expectations for the future by a scribe (redactor) who adopted the language of the First and Second Isaiah and of wisdom literature and using mantological exegesis (and, to a lesser extent, aggadic exegesis) transformed them into the transcendental eschatology found in some of the apocalypses. He included the version of his two predecessors in his own (Isaiah 56-66) and he added Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 34-35 to bind them together. Isaiah 56-66 has used typical wisdom themes such as the contrast between righteous and wicked (ethical dualism), ethical actions are given a higher value than cultic actions, 'death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life'.

The grounds (as they have been described by M. Fishbane in *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 1985) for arguing that Isaiah 56-66 is a piece of mantological exegesis are a marked preoccupation with older prophetic language from First and Second Isaiah and other texts of the Old Testament, inner-textual exegesis, pseudepigraphy, ex eventu prophecy, play on words and anthologies. Typologies are the grounds for arguing that Isaiah 56-66 contains aggadic exegesis. Isaiah 56-66 is one anthology with a recurring pattern of certain themes (it is divided into five structural units (1. Isa. 56:1-57:21; 2. Isa. 58:1-59:21; 3. Isa. 60:1-6; 4. Isa. 63:7-65:25; 5. Isa. 66:1-24, recapitulation of the ideas of the previous four structural units).

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank the 'State Scholarships Foundation' of Greece for offering me a scholarship which enabled me to study and meet all my financial commitments.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Michael A. Knibb, Professor of Old Testament Studies, for his guidance, constructive criticism, and encouragement throughout my research.

My final thanks go to all members of my family for their continuous support (Antonios, Demetrios, Georgia, Helen, John, Bill, John, Kostas, Fay).

I thank Lord who helped me to complete the Thesis before I die.

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INTRODUCTION

1) Isaiah 56-66 and the Origins of Apocalypticism

a) In 1975, Paul Hanson published a study on the origins of the apocalyptic phenomenon in post-exilic Judaism, under the title *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*¹.

Hanson opens his study on the beginnings of apocalyptic by challenging traditional notions of the nature and history of the Biblical apocalyptic literature, such as Martin Buber's² who, contrasting prophecy and apocalyptic and borrowing traits of the latter from the book of Daniel, concluded that there is no essential connection between prophecy and apocalyptic. In Hanson's view the origins of apocalyptic cannot be explained by a method which juxtaposes seventh and second century compositions and then proceeds to account for the features of the latter by reference to their immediate environment. Rather, Hanson argues, Israelite apocalyptic was "an unbroken development out of classical prophecy"³.

His study focuses upon "the strand of apocalyptic eschatology" "running at the heart of many of the so called apocalyptic works"⁴. He defines "prophetic eschatology" as "a religious perspective which focuses on the prophetic announcement to the nation of the divine plans for Israel and the world which the prophet has witnessed unfolding in the divine council and which he translates into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality; that is, the prophet interprets for the king and the people how the plans of the divine council will be effected within the context of their nation's history and the history of the world"⁵.

¹ The revised edition of this book was published in 1979. It is actually a reprint of the previous edition, the only difference being the addition of an appendix with the title 'An Overview of Early Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism'. In this study quotations are taken from the first edition.

² *Kampf um Israel; Reden und Schriften*, Berlin 1933.

³ *Dawn*, p. 29.

⁴ *Dawn*, p. 7.

⁵ *Dawn*, p. 11.

He also defines “apocalyptic eschatology” as “a religious perspective which focuses on the disclosure (usually esoteric in nature) to the elect of the cosmic vision of Yahweh’s sovereignty -especially as it relates to his acting to deliver his faithful- which disclosure the visionaries have largely ceased to translate into the terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality due to a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak post-exilic conditions within which those associated with the visionaries found themselves. Those conditions seemed unsuitable to them as a context for the envisioned restoration of Yahweh’s people”⁶.

In other words, Hanson sees a continuity of eschatology expressed in two different forms, prophetic and apocalyptic, each having its own vision of Yahweh’s people restored as a holy community. In tracing this continuity, Hanson assumes that the pre-exilic prophets, rejecting the mythical vision of Yahweh, translated their vision of Yahweh’s cosmic dominion “into the terms of contemporary history and politics”⁷. Subsequently, in the sixth century there was a real need for Second Isaiah, because of the end of Israel’s political identity as a nation and the Exile, to recall the cosmic and mythical and to translate it anew into Israel’s history. He achieved this by borrowing from the liturgical material of the royal cult of Jerusalem, a cult by then defunct. In consequence of this borrowing, YHWH “is portrayed as the Lord of the divine council announcing the renewal of nature accompanying Israel’s return to Zion (40:1ff.), as the Mighty Creator stretching out the heavens like a tent for his habitation (40:22), as the Divine Warrior slaying the chaos dragon in the primeval battle (51:9-11)”⁸.

The heavy borrowing from mythical material, however, did not lead Second Isaiah to raise the dialectic between vision and reality to a high tension.

Apocalyptic emerged, according to Hanson, as the result of the failure of the glorious redemptive promises of Second Isaiah to find fulfilment in the

⁶ *Dawn*, pp. 11-12.

⁷ *Dawn*, p. 16.

⁸ *Dawn*, p. 24.

politics of the post-exilic community. The visionary disciples of the prophets, no longer serving as officers within a political structure, but disenfranchised from what political structures survived, came to conceive of their offices in more exclusively religious terms. “Tending to ‘respiritualize’ Yahwism by leaving their vision more on the cosmic level of the activities of the Divine Warrior and his council, they increasingly abdicated the responsibility to the politico-historical order of translating the cosmic vision into the terms of the mundane”⁹.

They found it increasingly difficult to maintain the dialectic of Second Isaiah between myth and history, vision and reality. Thus, it was a different combination of elements long present in Israel’s religion and in prophecy that gave rise to apocalyptic, not the intrusion of a foreign ideology (for example Persian dualism and Hellenism). And the rise of apocalyptic is to be dated to the sixth century rather than to the third. Because of Second Isaiah’s use of mythic motifs his prophecy is designated by Hanson as “proto-apocalyptic”. Isaiah 56-66, Zechariah 9-10, and Isaiah 24-27 are designated as “early apocalyptic”, because “increasingly mythical motifs are applied with a literalism that offers escape from the harsh realities of this world”. Zechariah 11-14 is described as “late apocalyptic”¹⁰. In terms of dating, proto-apocalyptic stems from the second half of the sixth century; early apocalyptic is set between the end of the sixth and the early fifth century, and late apocalyptic between 475 and 425¹¹.

The historical and sociological matrix of apocalyptic is found, according to Hanson, in an inner-community struggle in the period of the Second Temple between visionary and hierocratic elements¹². The texts of Isaiah 56-66 and Zechariah 9-10 are used to throw light on the development of this struggle through a form-critical approach of prosodic analysis. Hanson calls his method “contextual-typological”: “it seeks to interpret

⁹ *Dawn*, p. 26.

¹⁰ *Dawn*, p. 27.

¹¹ *Dawn*, pp. 27, 400.

¹² *Dawn*, pp. 29, 209.

apocalyptic compositions within the context of the community struggle discernible behind the material studied, and it applies typological tools in analyzing the material. The typologies traced are those of poetic structure and meter, of prophetic oracle types (genres), and of the prophetic eschatology-apocalyptic eschatology continuum”¹³.

Partly following and partly diverging from O. Ploger (*Theokratie und Eschatologie*, 1956) who postulated the existence of two groups referred to in 1 Macc. 2 as standing together in opposition to Antiochus Epiphanes¹⁴, Hanson’s approach is, in fact, based on a reconstruction of the early post-exilic situation. According to him, two groups competed for the control of the Jerusalem cult after the return from Babylon. One was the “hierocratic party of the Zadokite priests returning from exile with their program for restoration presented in Ezekiel 40-48, Haggai, and Zechariah 1-8¹⁵. The other was the “visionary party” composed of followers of Second Isaiah in association with “the dissident Levitical-prophetic group resisting the official program”¹⁶, whose restoration program is expressed in Isaiah 60-62 and Zechariah 9-14.

In chapter II, Hanson discusses in detail Isa. 60-62, large sections of 64-65, and also Isa. 57:14-21, 58:1-12, 59:1-20, by means of his contextual-typological method, tracing the presence and the growth of tension within the community.

He rejects the general consensus that 63:7-64:12 is an early exilic lament by the whole of the community in the face of the ruined state of Jerusalem, the Temple, and other cities after the catastrophe of 587. Hanson sets the passage within the context of the inner-community conflict between the

¹³ *Dawn*, 29.

¹⁴ I.e. “the Maccabees and their followers at whose hands military insurrection and the attempt to rebuild a Jewish kingdom were undertaken, and a group referred to as the Hasidim, the ‘Pious’, whose steadfast faith and loyalty to the Law are praised; Ploger finds the passive but loyal attitude reflected by the book of Daniel to agree well with the outlook of the Hasidim discernible in 1 Macc. and suggests that the book of Daniel gave expression to the views of these Hasidim” (E.W. Nicholson, *Apocalyptic*, In G.W. Anderson (ed.), *Tradition and Interpretation*, Oxford 1979, 199-200).

¹⁵ *Dawn*, pp. 73-75, 96, 233-234, 240-262.

¹⁶ *Dawn*, p. 96.

hierocratic party and the visionaries. He discerns a Mushite¹⁷ attack (the background of many of the Levites) on the Zadokite-dominated golah (=exiles) group¹⁸. It is, he believes, a lament by the Levitical priests who had remained in Palestine. Hanson regards their appeal to God as their *Father* (63:16a.c; 64:7), as “a desperate clinging to YHWH” because the Zadokite priests, claiming the names *Abraham* and *Israel* (63:16b), ousted them from the sanctuary and deprived them of their legitimate part in the covenant community¹⁹. The names *Abraham* and *Israel*, however, can equally refer not to the central Israelite community but to “the patriarchs, the human fathers of the nation now unable to assist the present generation in their distress”²⁰, unlike God who alone “is living and present father”²¹. Moreover, the use of the name *Abraham* as a designation for the community is attested nowhere else in the Old Testament; Jacob is called *Israel* in order to emphasize the link between the people and their ancestors²². (See below in the discussion of Isaiah 63:7-64:11).

In chapter III Hanson traces the history of that struggle for control of the cult in the early post-exilic period from the point of view of the Zadokite priests who controlled the high priesthood from the first years of the Solomonic temple down to the second century B.C. He considers mostly texts from Ezekiel, Haggai, Zech. 1-8 and Chronicles, and shows how the Zadokite priesthood was for a long period “in a position to mould the character of post-exilic Judaism along the lines of its temple theology”²³.

In chapter IV Hanson turns his attention to Zech. 9-14, a difficult text which in his view “belongs to the same visionary tradition which we have

¹⁷ They claimed the name of Moses as evidence of their legitimacy.

¹⁸ *Dawn*, p. 95.

¹⁹ *idem*, pp. 92-93.

²⁰ Emerson, *Isaiah 56-66*, 1992, p. 87.

²¹ Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 1969, p. 393.

²² H.G.M. Williamson, *Isaiah 63:7-64:11: Exilic Lament or Post-Exilic Protest?*, *ZAW* 102 (1990), 54.

²³ *Dawn*, p. 280.

found in Third Isaiah”²⁴. In Zech. 14, he claims, the conflict mentioned above “reaches its most desperate level”²⁵.

In the final chapter Hanson presents a peroration on an “allegory” of how the marriage between prophecy and royalty has given birth to apocalyptic eschatology.

Hanson’s claim to be able to reconstruct the post-exilic Jewish community, to find reflections of a struggle between two parties in the above mentioned texts, and, in particular, his interpretation of Isaiah 56-66 as arising out of a situation of conflict between the hierocratic and visionary parties must be regarded with some reserve, because of “the impossibility of substantiating his argument by any independent historical evidence. There is no doubt that at a later time there were a number of clearly defined parties within Judaism, but there is no other evidence that such existed in the early post-exilic period”²⁶. Hanson’s sociological method has tended to politicize and polarize the biblical material and render it into a type of political propaganda²⁷.

²⁴ *Dawn*, p. 286.

²⁵ *Dawn*, p. 399.

²⁶ Emmerson, *Isaiah 56-66*, p. 90; cf. D. Thomas, Jewish Apocalyptic and the Comparative Method, in Evans, Hallo, White (eds.), *Scripture in Context*, 1980, pp. 254-255; .

²⁷ Recently Brooks Schramm (in his book *The Opponents of Third Isaiah: Reconstructing the Cultic History of the Restoration*, 1995) has offered an extended critique of Hanson’s view that Trito-Isaiah reflects conflict between a priestly Babylonian party and a visionary Judean party. His investigation of Isaiah 56-66 “focuses on the question of who is to be *excluded* from the restoration community” (*The Opponents*, p. 51). Schramm accepts that the most obvious characteristic of the material in Isaiah 56-66 is its polemical nature. He also accepts that Isaiah 40-55 was highly polemical as well, but the only difference, according to him, between the two works is that “the polemic in Third Isaiah is not directed outwardly, that is, toward foreign nations, but rather inwardly, toward groups or individuals within the restoration community” (*The Opponents*, pp. 83-84). He challenges one aspect of Hanson’s thesis, namely, the identity of the group that is singled out for condemnation in Third Isaiah (that is, the Zadokite priests). Because of the relationship between Isaiah 56-66 and Isaiah 40-55 (following the views of Childs, Ackroyd, Clements, Rendtorff, and Sweeney in their view that the book of Isaiah is a redactional unity and that the themes of each of the major sections of the book are present throughout the book) and of the fact that “Isaiah 40-55 is literature of the Babylonian גּוֹלָה, by the Babylonian גּוֹלָה, and for the Babylonian גּוֹלָה”, Schramm’s

Another element which evokes caution against his theory is the fact that some of the key passages on which Hanson bases his argument are obscure and open to a very different interpretation²⁸.

Hanson's interpretation of Zechariah 1-8, Haggai and Ezekiel as representing the viewpoint of the hierocratic party over against the visionary-apocalyptic compels him to deny that Zechariah 1-8 contains many features which are characteristic of the later apocalypses, such as, "visions, the role of interpreting angels, numerical symbolism, animal representation as embodying particular symbolical realities"²⁹. The existence of apocalyptic elements, such as, "bizarre imagery, visions, divine interpretation" in Ezekiel³⁰ and the eschatological element in both Haggai and Zechariah³¹ have also been overlooked by Hanson.

Concerning the elusive matter of dating it may also be said that heavy reliance on a certain theory of prosodic development and on the presence or absence of mythical elements does not lead to a convincing conclusion. Moreover, the anxiety to fit so much into the late sixth and early fifth centuries makes it all the more difficult to account for developments

deduction is that Isaiah 56-66 can not be "anti - גוֹלָה in outlook" (*The Opponents*, pp. 108-109). According to Schramm, "all of the accusations made against the group in question" in Isaiah 56-66 in general and in passages like Isa. 57:3-13; 65:1-7, 11-15; 66:3-4, 17 in particular "are consistently and repeatedly condemned in the Pentateuch" (*The Opponents*, p. 110). This shows that Third Isaiah and the 'priestly' Pentateuch, in regard to those cultic practices that are condemned, are in total agreement. Schramm's proposal suggests that Third Isaiah is representative of the interests and the theology of the Babylonian גוֹלָה. "Third Isaiah was written by the very group that Hanson claims it was written *against*" (*The Opponents*, p. 179). His proposal emphasizes that "Third Isaiah was not fighting against some sort of 'pagan' (non-YHWHistic) religion but rather against traditional, syncretistic YHWHists, people whose religious practices had a long history in the (pre-exilic) kingdoms of Israel and Judah" (*The Opponents*, p. 181). Schramm's interpretation of passages, such as Isaiah 63:1-6 (an oracle against the nations), is problematic because he insinuates that it is to be interpreted as if it was proclaimed against individuals within the community (*The Opponents*, p. 149).

²⁸ R. Carroll, *Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?*, *JSOT* 14 (1979), 24.

²⁹ R.J. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, OTG 1987, p. 57.

³⁰ Carroll, *Twilight of Prophecy or Dawn of Apocalyptic?*, *JSOT* 14 (1979), 12; cf. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 1987, pp. 48-49.

³¹ M.A. Knibb, *Prophecy and the Emergence of the Jewish Apocalypses*, in Coggins, Phillips and Knibb (eds.), *Israel's Prophetic Tradition*, 1982, 174-175; cf. Coggins, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 1987, p. 55.

during the large gap between that time and the composition of such indubitably apocalyptic works as Enoch and Daniel.

b) The debate over the question of the complex origins of apocalypses and apocalypticism has taken place within various sets of opinions.

The first is concerned with whether apocalypticism was “the child of prophecy”³². The second is concerned with whether it was due primarily to outside influences, that is, “foreign adaptation of Persian dualism”³³.

Hanson denied, at first, that foreign religious ideas were at all operative in the development of apocalyptic out of prophecy, maintaining that influences from Persian dualism and from Hellenism were late and came only after the essential character of apocalyptic was fully developed³⁴. However, in his article *Apocalypticism*, he pointed out: “the obvious instances of not only sapiential material, but of materials deriving from Greek, Hellenistic, and various Eastern sources disallow the identification of apocalypticism as a simple rectilinear development out of prophecy”³⁵.

Gerhard von Rad suggested that apocalypticism was an outgrowth not of prophecy but of wisdom³⁶. His main argument was what he saw as the deterministic view of history in wisdom and apocalypticism, a view alien to Israelite prophecy³⁷. The sapiential character of the stories in Daniel has been emphasized and implications drawn from the utilization of a wisdom figure like Daniel as the pseudepigraphic author of an apocalypse³⁸. Von Rad’s hypothesis has not remained undeveloped, however. Apocalypticism

³² H.H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*, 1963, p. 15; cf. D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 1964, pp. 92-96; P. Hanson, *Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 1975 (reprint 1979) (see above).

³³ So W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im spathellenistischen Zeitalter*, Tübingen 1926 (direct quotation from Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 1984, p. 16).

³⁴ *Dawn*, p. 8.

³⁵ *IDB Supplement* (1976), p. 29; cf. idem, Appendix: An Overview of Early Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism, *Dawn*, 1979, pp. 430-431.

³⁶ *OT Theology*, vol. II, 1965 (=ET), pp. 306-308; cf. idem, *Wisdom in Israel*, 1972, pp. 263-283.

³⁷ *Wisdom in Israel*, pp. 263-283.

³⁸ *OT Theology*, vol. II, 1965 (=ET), pp. 306, 308-315.

does use the language of wisdom, but it has much closer parallels with Babylonian³⁹ and Israelite mantic wisdom than the type of wisdom found in Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Sirach.

Muller sought to defend von Rad by defining more precisely the kind of wisdom that, in his view, lies behind apocalyptic. He argued that we have to distinguish between educational and mantic wisdom and that apocalypticism is a continuation of the latter rather than the former⁴⁰. In mantic wisdom, as in the apocalypses, there are mysterious signs (dreams and visions) to be interpreted (Daniel 2:31ff.; 4:19ff.; 5:13ff.) that hold the key to the future, and there is a deterministic view of history⁴¹. Von Rad's proposal has been widely criticized on two grounds⁴². First, it has been observed that if wisdom is the matrix from which apocalyptic literature originates, the differences between the wisdom books and the apocalypses are quite remarkable. In particular the complete lack of concern with eschatology in the wisdom writings needs to be explained. Second, it has been pointed out that it is by no means clear that von Rad has correctly described the relationship between the apocalyptic and prophetic view of history. According to von Rad, the essential characteristic of the former is that everything had been determined in advance, and this is held to provide a contrast with prophecy and a link with wisdom. However, "it is a commonplace of prophecy that YHWH controls the events of history, while Second Isaiah...provides a specific parallel to the apocalyptic view of history with his belief that YHWH not only determines, but also foretells, what is going to take place. The way in which the deterministic ideas are expressed in the apocalypses is, of

³⁹ J.Z. Smith, *Wisdom and Apocalyptic*, In B.A. Pearson (ed.), *Religious Syncretism in Antiquity* (1975), pp. 131-156.

⁴⁰ *Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik*, *SVT* 22 (1972), 268-293.

⁴¹ *ibidem*; cf. J.J. Collins, *The Court Tales in Daniel and the Development of Apocalyptic*, *JBL* 94 (1975), 218-234; idem, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 17, 21.

⁴² A summary of von Rad's thoughts and the debate they have provoked has been provided by M.A. Knibb in his essay *Prophecy and the Emergence of the Jewish Apocalypses*, in R.J. Coggins, A. Phillips and M.A. Knibb (eds.), *Israel's Prophetic Heritage. Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd*, Cambridge, 1982, pp. 165-169.

course, quite different from that of prophecy, but this does not mean that the apocalypses do not represent a continuation of prophecy...The determinism of wisdom is nowhere expressed in relation to history or concerned with the eschaton, whereas these are the essential characteristics of the determinism of the apocalypses”⁴³.

The above-outlined criticism shows that Von Rad’s view that the apocalyptic literature was the child of wisdom rather than of prophecy and his approach is certainly “one-sided”⁴⁴, since a number of studies have shown that the authors of the apocalypses use and reinterpret a wide range of Old Testament passages. These include passages from the Pentateuch, the Psalms, prophetic and wisdom material. The wide range of this material serves as a further warning against the attempt to tie the apocalyptic writings down to a single stream of tradition within the Old Testament.

However, von Rad’s view has the merit of drawing attention to some hitherto neglected aspects of the apocalyptic books. Not least among these is the fact that the figures to whom the major apocalypses are ascribed, Enoch, Daniel, Ezra, Baruch, are sages or scribes. In the Hebrew Bible Daniel is presented as a *משכיל* ‘one who has insight’ (Dan. 1:4, 9:25) and included among the ‘wise’ men of Babylon (Dan. 2:13). Wisdom features are to be observed in the apocalypses, and reference may be made here to some recent attempts to take positive account of them. Michael Stone studied the “lists of revealed things” in the apocalypses and concluded that such speculative concerns most probably derived from wisdom sources⁴⁵. However, he found very few parallels in the biblical wisdom books. John Gammie analyzed the concepts of spatial and ethical dualism in wisdom and apocalyptic literature and he suggested that “wisdom literature constituted at least one of the sources from which apocalyptic writers

⁴³ M.A. Knibb, Prophecy and the Emergence, in R.J. Coggins, A. Phillips and M.A. Knibb (eds.), *Israel’s Prophetic Heritage*, p. 167.

⁴⁴ *Idem*, p. 168.

⁴⁵ Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature, in F.M. Cross, W. Lemke, P.D. Miller (eds.), *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God*, 1976, pp. 414-451.

inherited [these] concepts”⁴⁶. Michael A. Knibb has pointed to examples of “wisdom thinking” in 4 Ezra⁴⁷ and F.J. Murphy in 2 Baruch⁴⁸, both works wrestling at length with the problem of theodicy. John J. Collins, comparing the Hellenistic (deuterocanonical) Wisdom of Solomon and the Jewish apocalypses, found that there is apocalyptic influence in the Wisdom of Solomon, in its formulation of the judgement of the dead⁴⁹.

The weakness of von Rad’s view is that he fails to define the terms “wisdom” and “apocalyptic”. The ambiguity of these terms has been stressed by all modern scholars. Michael A. Knibb has suggested that the term “apocalyptic” as a noun is ambiguous and it should be abandoned⁵⁰. P.D. Hanson distinguishes between apocalypse as a literary genre, apocalypticism as a social ideology of groups (“apocalyptic movements”), and apocalyptic eschatology⁵¹.

A comprehensive definition of the literary genre apocalypse has been given by J.J. Collins: “Apocalypse is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world”⁵². Addressing the issue of the relationship between the apocalypses and apocalypticism and criticizing Hanson’s definition of apocalypticism as

⁴⁶ Spatial and Ethical Dualism, *JBL* 93 (1974), 384.

⁴⁷ Apocalyptic and Wisdom in 4 Ezra, *JSJ* 13 (1982), 56-74.

⁴⁸ Sapiential Elements in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, *JQR* 77 (1986), 311-327.

⁴⁹ Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age, *History of Religions* 17 (1977), 121-142; cf. idem, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 17.

⁵⁰ Prophecy and the Emergence of the Jewish Apocalypses, in R.J. Coggins, A. Phillips, M.A. Knibb (eds.), *Israel’s Prophetic Heritage*, 1982, pp. 157-160, 164; cf. M.E. Stone, Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature, in F.M. Cross, W.E. Lemke, P.D. Miller, Jr (eds.), *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God*, 1976, p. 443.

⁵¹ Apocalypse, Genre, and Apocalypticism, *IDB Supplement* (1976), pp. 27-34; See the comments of M.A. Knibb, Prophecy and the Emergence, in R.J. Coggins, A. Phillips, M.A. Knibb (eds.), *Israel’s Prophetic Heritage*, 1982, pp. 160-161. M.A. Knibb prefers a twofold distinction between the apocalypses and apocalyptic eschatology.

⁵² Towards the Morphology of a Genre, *Semeia* 14, *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (1979), p. 9.

referring “to the symbolic universe in which an apocalyptic movement codifies its identity and interpretation of reality”⁵³, J.J. Collins has argued that Hanson’s apocalypticism “is not simply identical with the content of apocalypses. There are apocalypses that are not the product of a movement in any meaningful sense”⁵⁴. For example, there is little evidence that a movement, apocalyptic or other, lies behind 4 Ezra, the Apocalypse of Zephaniah or 3 Baruch⁵⁵. According to J.J. Collins, “since the adjective apocalyptic and the noun apocalypticism are derived from ‘apocalypse’, it is only reasonable to expect that they indicate some analogy with the apocalypses”. And below, “if the word apocalypticism is taken to mean the ideology of a movement that shares the conceptual structure of the apocalypses, then we must recognize that there may be different types of apocalyptic movements, just as there are different types of apocalypses”⁵⁶. Simply put, the apocalyptic worldview is the perspective of the apocalypses. A basic definition of the worldview common to all apocalypses is inherent in the definition of the genre. Therefore, a worldview can be called apocalyptic if supernatural revelation to a human seer through a heavenly intermediary, the heavenly world, and eschatological salvation and judgement played essential parts. Such a worldview might well be represented in works that are not themselves apocalypses, such as, some scrolls from Qumran or some texts from early Christianity. But the judgement that any of these works is apocalyptic in outlook must be based on its affinities with apocalypses⁵⁷.

Apocalyptic eschatology, again according to J.J. Collins, is “the kind of eschatology that is found in the apocalypses. ...As there are different types

⁵³ Apocalypticism, *IDB Supplement* (1976), p. 30.

⁵⁴ *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 10.

⁵⁵ F.J. Murphy, Apocalypses and Apocalypticism, *CR:BS 2* (1994), 161.

⁵⁶ *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 10; See the classification of the various types of apocalypses offered by J.J. Collins in Towards the Morphology of a Genre, *Semeia 14*, *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (1979), pp. 12-19.

⁵⁷ *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 10.

of apocalypses, there are correspondingly different types of apocalyptic eschatology”⁵⁸.

Von Rad’s definition of wisdom is too broad a category for tracing part of the origins of the apocalypses to it. He views wisdom as “practical knowledge of the laws of life and of the world, based on experience” and he thinks that “wisdom had to do with the whole of life, and had to be occupied with all of its departments”⁵⁹. James Crenshaw criticised von Rad’s definition on the grounds that it “is so comprehensive that it becomes unusable” and that “it is little surprise to discover wisdom everywhere, for what literature does not grow out of and reflect experience?”⁶⁰.

There is a difficulty in giving a definite definition of wisdom because of the variation within this vast literary corpus. Some scholars highlighting the need for a typology distinguish various types of sapiential material. J.G. Gammie has distinguished the following six types⁶¹:

- 1) Prudential or practical which contains instructions (eg. Proverbs 1-9) and pareneses (that is, exhortations) (eg. Proverbs 10-31, Sirach).
- 2) Critical or skeptical which contains disputations (eg. Job) and reflections (eg. Qoheleth).
- 3) Juridical which has to do with the law and is to be found chiefly in the three wisdom psalms that focus on the *tora*, Ps. 1, 19, 119.
- 4) Wisdom of nature which focuses upon the realm of natural phenomena (Job 38-39; Qoh. 1:1-11; 3:1-11).
- 5) Theological wisdom which wrestles with issues of meaning, purpose, justice, creation, and order; like the two minor types mentioned above

⁵⁸ *idem*, p. 9.

⁵⁹ Von Rad, *OT Theology I* (ET 1962), pp. 418, 428; Cf. J.L. McKenzie who, taking over von Rad’s definition, views wisdom as an “approach to reality”, “a firm belief in the validity of experience” (Reflections on Wisdom, *JBL* 86 (1967), 2, 4).

⁶⁰ Method in Determining Wisdom Influence upon ‘Historical’ Literature, *JBL* 88 (1969), 132-134; reprint in J.L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions*, Atlanta 1995, p. 314.

⁶¹ From Prudentialism to Apocalypticism. The Houses of the Sages amid the Varying Forms of Wisdom, in J.G. Gammie, L.G. Perdue (eds.), *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, 1990, p. 481.

(juridical and wisdom of nature), it is not confined to either critical wisdom or traditional wisdom but it is to be found in both, for example, Proverbs 1-9; 30:1-9 and Sirach 1, 24, 51. Unlike juridical wisdom and the wisdom of nature, theological wisdom is not a minor type. The engagement with matters pertaining to meaning and purpose in the Book of Job (reflections on Theodicy), Qoheleth, and the Wisdom of Solomon is so extensive that these works in their entirety may be understood as theological wisdom coalescent with other types.

6) Mantic wisdom which has to do with the interpretation of dreams and hidden signs or omens.

Four of these types were already identified by J.L. Crenshaw (practical, juridical, natural [or nature wisdom], and theological)⁶². Crenshaw has only the biblical wisdom books in mind in all of this and is not reckoning with mantic wisdom or with the higher wisdom through revelation of the Hellenistic period⁶³.

Addressing the issue of the relationship between wisdom and apocalypticism and defining wisdom, J.J. Collins⁶⁴ has distinguished five broad types of sapiential material:

- 1) wisdom sayings (Spruchweisheit, including aphorisms and more developed instructions and admonitions) such as we find in Proverbs 10-30;
- 2) theological wisdom, including both speculative passages such as Proverbs 8 and reflections on theodicy (such as the entire book of Job);
- 3) nature wisdom, exemplified in Job 28, 38-41;
- 4) mantic wisdom (divination and dream interpretation); and
- 5) higher wisdom through revelation, including apocalyptic revelations.

⁶² Method in Determining Wisdom influence upon 'Historical' Literature, in J.L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Urgent Advice*, p. 315.

⁶³ For this type of wisdom see M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, Philadelphia 1974, vol. I, pp. 202-218.

⁶⁴ Wisdom, Apocalypticism, and Generic Compatibility, in L.G. Perdue, B.B. Scott, W.J. Wiseman (eds.), *In Search of Wisdom. Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, 1993, p. 168.

According to J.J. Collins, “to say that apocalypticism is an example of wisdom by revelation (type 5) or is influenced by mantic wisdom (type 4) does not imply any necessary connection between apocalypticism and the experiential wisdom of Proverbs”⁶⁵.

Leaving aside the mantic and revelatory kinds of wisdom that are “intrinsically related to apocalypticism”, J.J. Collins notes that nature wisdom, theological wisdom, and wisdom sayings are used in apocalyptic contexts in various ways. “The forms of wisdom speech are adaptable and may be used in the service of more than one worldview”⁶⁶.

At this point, I have to make clear that I do not search for an “influence” of wisdom on the apocalyptic works but of a usage of wisdom language by them. There are some elements which are typically associated with wisdom, elements which include words and expressions as well as some typical wisdom themes. I agree with the scepticism expressed by R.N. Whybray⁶⁷ and J.L. Crenshaw⁶⁸ for the attempts of those scholars⁶⁹ to search for an “influence” of wisdom literature on other Old Testament literary traditions (including prophecy). The arguments they use to prove “influence” have been based on the similarity of vocabulary and subject matter. The futility of using vocabulary as the clue to wisdom’s presence outside the wisdom corpus has been demonstrated by R.N. Whybray⁷⁰. The use of such words as “*counsel, wisdom, upright, council, understanding, father and son, hear, keep, etc.*” carries little cogency. These words, though

⁶⁵ *idem*, pp. 168-169.

⁶⁶ Wisdom, Apocalypticism, and Generic Compatibility, in L.G. Perdue, B.B. Scott, W.J. Wiseman (eds.), *In Search of Wisdom. Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, 1993, p. 181; J.J. Collins has provided examples of themes from wisdom and apocalyptic literature featuring the contrast in worldview between apocalypticism and these three types of wisdom (*idem*, pp. 170-181).

⁶⁷ Prophecy and Wisdom, in R.J. Coggins, A. Phillips, M.A. Knibb (eds.), *Israel’s Prophetic Heritage*, 1982, pp. 111-199.

⁶⁸ Method in Determining Wisdom Influence upon “Historical” Literature, *JBL* 88 (1969), 129-142; reprinted in J.L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions*, 1995, pp. 312-325.

⁶⁹ For bibliography see *idem*, pp. 312, n. 1, and Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, 1974, pp. 1-2, n. 1.

⁷⁰ *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, 1974.

frequently used in the wisdom books, are not confined to them; they belong to the common linguistic stock shared by sage, prophet, and priest. This leads to an important observation made by J.L. Crenshaw. According to him, “differences in nuance must be explained. Whenever a wisdom phrase or motif is found outside wisdom literature the scholar must determine whether or not the meaning has been changed”⁷¹. A similar point is made by J.J. Collins when he says that “a wisdom instruction” is “adapted” to suit “the apocalyptic worldview”⁷². In the light of the above it might be more fruitful to look for the possible differences in the ways in which the same words and expressions are used by prophetic, wisdom, and apocalyptic literature instead of focusing on their possibly superficial similarities.

In this Thesis I apply the types of sapiential material which, as we saw a few paragraphs above, were distinguished by J.G. Gammie and J.J. Collins. From those types the higher wisdom through revelation (type 5 in J.J. Collins’ scheme) is not found in Isaiah 56-66. I will trace the usage in Isaiah 56-66 of mantic wisdom and of sapiential material found in biblical wisdom books. The criterion for the presence of the first type will be the mantological exegesis of older prophecy⁷³. The criterion for the presence of the latter type will be the usage of typical wisdom themes such as the contrast between righteous and wicked (ethical dualism) (found mostly in Proverbs 10-15), the problem of Theodicy (found in the book of Job), the attack upon laziness, the attack upon drunken leaders, ethical actions are given a higher value than cultic actions, ‘death of the righteous

⁷¹ Method in Determining Wisdom Influence upon “Historical” Literature, in *Urgent Advice and Probing Questions*, 1995, p. 316.

⁷² Wisdom, Apocalypticism, and Generic Compatibility, in L.G. Perdue, B.B. Scott, W.J. Wiseman (eds.), *In Search of Wisdom. Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, 1993, p. 181.

⁷³ M. Fishbane’s work *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (1985) has shed light on the study of mantic wisdom. He identified the kind of exegesis which is contained in mantic wisdom and which he calls mantological exegesis of visions, dreams, omens and of oracles (see below in the discussion of the Method applied in this study). I have found that Isaiah 56-66 contains mantological exegesis (see below in the second part of this Thesis).

is a release from the bleak conditions of life'. Apart from the ethical dualism and the theme 'the death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life', the rest of the themes do not belong exclusively to the wisdom literature. But it is essential to stress that in spite of the use of themes popular in wisdom circles, Isaiah 56-66 introduces a nuance alien to wisdom, namely, the eschatological nuance. There are also a few linguistic affinities with the wisdom literature, such as the blessing formula *אשרי אנוש יעשה זאת*, the expression 'the pointing of the finger' (it is found only in Prov. 6:13 and Isa. 58:9b in the Old Testament), the word *מצה* 'contention' (only in Prov. 13:10, 17:19 and Isa. 58:4), and the expression *יום נקם* 'day of vengeance' (only in Prov. 6:34 and Isa. 34:8, 61:2, 63:4).

At the end of the last century, Herman Gunkel analyzed apocalypticism in terms of its use of ancient myths⁷⁴. He argued that the Babylonian mythological material was re-interpreted in the apocalypses. Some logical inconsistencies of the apocalypses were due to reuse of "traditional material", others to the "symbolic and allusive character" of the mythological imagery of the apocalypses⁷⁵.

The interest in mythological, especially Canaanite, sources was renewed with the works of Frank M. Cross⁷⁷ and P. Hanson⁷⁸, and it was combined with the derivation of apocalypticism from prophecy. Mythological elements are indeed present in the Bible, and they may have been more prevalent in the cult than the texts show⁷⁹. Myths such as that of the divine warrior (Isaiah 56-66: 59:15b-17; 63:1-6; 63:19b-64:2; 66:14b-16; Isaiah 24-27; Zech. 14:12) seem to have been for the most part

⁷⁴ *Schopfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit*, 1895.

⁷⁵ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 13.

⁷⁷ New Directions in the Study of Apocalyptic, *JTC* 6 (1969), 157-165; idem, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 1973.

⁷⁸ Jewish Apocalyptic against its Near Eastern Environment, *RB* 78 (1971), 31-58.

⁷⁹ Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, pp. 145-147, 270.

historicized in the Hebrew Bible, and then remythologized in apocalypticism. Hanson finds that prophetic eschatology is transformed into apocalyptic eschatology when the dissident visionary group (in Third Isaiah, that is, the disciples of Second Isaiah) shifted the mythological idea of the divine warrior from the historical (in Second Isaiah) to an eschatological theme. Direct intervention by YHWH is the only basis for their hope (Isa. 59:15-18; 63:1ff.). This shift took place during the post-exilic period, the late sixth or early fifth century and it was due to a growing sense of alienation (59:2ff.) from the hierocracy and a pessimistic view of the reality⁸⁰.

The prophetic visionary, just as much as the wise man, wanted answers to the problems which beset him. Indeed, this is precisely the point which Hanson is making about the later prophetic movement. The situation in the world engendered a reaction against traditional institutions and a retreat into a world of vision. One does not have to agree with his sociological analysis to realize that the impact of the world upon the religious consciousness of the individual was such that, whatever his religious background, he would be working towards solutions to the various kinds of "actual distresses" which surrounded him⁸¹. At times, this attempt to explain man's situation led to a confluence of different religious streams in the quest for the meaning of human existence.

Nevertheless the attempt of several scholars to relate apocalyptic to the various social or ideological movements (Hasidim, Pharisees, Essenes)⁸² in emerging Judaism has failed "to demonstrate more than a general similarity among the various apocalyptic documents and a unified social,

⁸⁰ Cf. Apocalypticism, *IDB Supplement*, (1976), pp. 28-34; Jewish Apocalyptic against its Near Eastern Environment, *RB* 78 (1971), 51; OT Apocalyptic Re-examined, *Interpretation* 25 (1971), 454-479.

⁸¹ P. Vielhauer, Apocalypses and Related Subjects, In E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (eds.), *New Testament Apocrypha* ii, 1965, p. 598; cf. R.R. Wilson, From Prophecy to Apocalyptic, *Semeia* 21 (1981), 84-85.

⁸² Hanson created two more parties after he had rejected the "party" approach for the origins of apocalyptic (*Dawn*, p. 20), that is, the "visionary" and the "hierocratic" "faction", and he set them historically after the Exile (*Dawn*, pp. 9-10, 29).

economic, political, or historical reality behind all the documents”⁸³. The belief that it was a crisis situation which may have given rise to apocalypticism, whether or not this implies an internal conflict within Judaism, has found acceptance by most scholars⁸⁴.

Hanson’s reconstruction of the situation after the Exile has been regarded as purely hypothetical. P.R. Ackroyd has pointed out how difficult it is to posit a precise setting for many of the oracles of the later chapters of Isaiah⁸⁵. But even if it is granted that Hanson has offered a reconstruction of the situation in which these oracles were produced, the question arises whether he has in fact offered any illumination of the apocalyptic movement as it is to be found in the genre given the definition “apocalypse”⁸⁶. The apocalypses were not constituted by one or more distinctive themes but by a distinctive combination of elements, all of which are also found elsewhere.

Biblical prophecy served as a source for many elements of the eschatology in the apocalypses. But prophecy was transformed under such foreign influences as Mesopotamian mantic wisdom, Persian dualism, Hellenistic political prophecy and belief in rewards and punishments after death. Apocalypses result from a development of elements within Judaism and a transformation of those elements under foreign influences, but the end result was more than the sum of the parts. Genetic explanations can be misleading if they reduce apocalypticism to a mere derivative from other elements⁸⁷.

⁸³ G.G. Porton, Diversity in Postbiblical Judaism, In R.A. Kraft and G.W.E. Nickelsburg (eds.), *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, 1986, p. 62.

⁸⁴ R.R. Wilson, From Prophecy to Apocalyptic, *Semeia* 21, (1981), 84-85; cf. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 29.

⁸⁵ *Exile and Restoration*, pp. 118f.

⁸⁶ Collins has given the following definition: “Apocalypse is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world” (Towards the Morphology of a Genre, *Semeia* 14, *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (1979), p. 9).

⁸⁷ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 17-18.

The allusions to biblical and other traditions reflect systematic study⁴⁰. The pseudonymous authors frequently are identified as wise men or scribes (Enoch, Daniel, Ezra, Baruch)⁸⁸.

The various concerns throughout the apocalypses cover: a) a spatial dimension, that is, what is above (the heavenly world) and what is below (the earth), and b) a temporal dimension, that is, what has been in the past and what will be in the future. The revelation of these mysteries is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient⁸⁹.

Is there, in the material of Isaiah 56-66, the reflection of an early form of Jewish apocalypticism?

This Introduction will turn now to investigate whether Isaiah 56-66 shares with the apocalyptic literature common eschatological or non-eschatological beliefs and to trace the influences under which the future hopes of Isaiah 1-39 and 40-55 were transformed into the eschatology found in Isaiah 56-66.

A) The underlying theme, that is, “the disclosure of the divine secrets”⁹⁰ by “an otherworldly mediator”⁹¹ is not to be found in the material of Isaiah 56-66. Neither does the interest in astronomy and in the heavenly secrets after a journey to the presence of God in heaven or disclosure of them by an angel⁹² appear in Isaiah 56-66.

B) In the apocalypses written towards the end of the first century AD [Apocalypse of Abraham, 4 Ezra (2 Esdras 3-14), 2 Baruch (Syriac

⁴⁰ Cf. J.Z. Smith, *Wisdom and Apocalyptic*, In B.A. Pearson's (ed.), *Religious Syncretism in Antiquity*, 1975, p. 140: “wisdom and apocalyptic....are scribal phenomena”.

⁸⁸ G. von Rad, *Wisdom*, p. 272.

⁸⁹ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 77; cf. J.J. Collins, *Towards the Morphology of a Genre*, *Semeia* 14 (1979), pp. 6-8, 12-19; idem, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 1984, pp. 4, 9.

⁹⁰ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 14; cf. G. Bornkamm, *Mysterion*, *TDNT* iv, p. 815; D. Flusser, *Apocalypse*, *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 3, col. 179.

⁹¹ Collins, *The Jewish Apocalypses*, *Semeia* 14 (1979), p. 29.

⁹² Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 78-123.

Baruch), 3 Baruch (Greek Baruch)], the interest is in the destiny of mankind in the future, and particularly the destiny of the people of YHWH and the reason for their present desperate straits in which they found themselves⁹³. The concern with man's destiny has affinities with the meditations of part of the Wisdom tradition (cf. Job)⁹⁴.

The underlying questions of 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch (Syriac Baruch), the Apocalypse of Abraham, and 3 Baruch are shaped in large part by the catastrophe of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. The response to the question why has a just God allowed the sinful Gentiles to defeat His people and devastate their land and his Temple, posed in these apocalyptic works, moves beyond the specific historical crisis to the general problem of theodicy or the justice of God⁹⁵.

The first three sections in 4 Ezra (the book divides into seven sections) are dialogues (between Ezra and an angel) about theodicy. In 4 Ezra 3:25-27 Ezra states that the nation is now in ruins because God has punished his people for the sins their evil hearts led them to commit (cf. the lament in Isa. 63:7-64:11 whose main theme is the lack of any saving act on YHWH's part, in their present distress, that is, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by a foreign enemy, because of the people's sin; see also Isa. 59:1-2 where there is the act and consequence relationship between the sin of the people and the absence of salvation). 4 Ezra 7:19-25 states that the wicked will be judged according to their deeds, for they are responsible for these deeds. This theme of the reward by YHWH according to one's deeds, that is, the principle of retribution is found in Isa. 59:18-20. In 4 Ezra 7:33-44 there is a description of the great judgement which will follow the resurrection. Judgement will be on the basis of deeds, and even the Gentiles will be punished for not having served the 'Most High'

⁹³ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 126-135.

⁹⁴ Though these works reflect the same kind of questioning human suffering as we find in the book of Job and in both cases the final answers to the question only come as the result of divine revelation, Job is different (Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 205-208; cf. G. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 1972, pp. 206-226).

⁹⁵ J.J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 156, 159; cf. G.W.E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah*, 1981, p. 280.

and obeyed his commandments⁹⁶. This theme that both Israel and nations will be judged according to their deeds is also found in Isa. 59:18ab-19a (*According to their deeds is that which he will repay: wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies. To the coastlands he will repay recompense. And those in the west shall fear the name of YHWH, and those in the east, his glory*) and Isa. 66:24 (*And they will go out and look at the corpses of the men who have transgressed against me. For their worm will not die, their fire will not be quenched, and they will continue to be an abhorrence to all mankind*).

The final visions in 4 Ezra offer reassurance that the way of righteousness will ultimately be vindicated. The work ends on a note of hope and promise, but there is nothing in these final visions which reverses the pessimistic tone of the earlier part of the book. The promise of the new Jerusalem (4 Ezra 10:46ff.), the overthrow of pagan Rome (4 Ezra 11-12), and the coming of the messiah are all part of the apparatus of the eschatology of Judaism, but the hope is reserved for the righteous alone. The great multitude which assembles on Mount Zion (4 Ezra 13:40ff.) is there, not because it happens to be the elect people but because it has kept the statutes of God. The future glory is for the righteous alone, and no one who has acted impiously can escape the coming wrath⁹⁷.

The theme of punishment for the wicked and salvation for the righteous is found not only in 4 Ezra but frequently in the other apocalypses⁹⁸ as well. In Isaiah 56-66 it is found in Isa. 57:13bc-21; 59:15b-21; 65:8-16a, 18-25; 66:3-6, 14, 17. In 60:1-63:6 the relationship between Israel and the nations is presented in terms of the same theme (salvation of the righteous Israel: Isa. 60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a and punishment of the (ungodly) nations: 60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6)⁹⁹.

⁹⁶ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 1981, p. 290; cf. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 163.

⁹⁷ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 130-131.

⁹⁸ For example 1 Enoch 1-36: 1:1, 8-9; 5:6-7; 10:17; 25:4; Apocalypse of Weeks (1 Enoch 93+91:11-17): 93:2-4, 10; 91:11-13, 14; Testament of Levi 5:7; 16:2.

⁹⁹ Cf. Daniel 9:7; 10:13, 20; 11:33; 12:1; Similitudes (1 Enoch 38:4, 5; 46:4-8; 48:8-10; 52:7; 53:1-2, 5; 54:2; 55:4; 62:1, 3, 6, 9-11; 63:1-12); 4 Ezra 7:36-38; 13:10-12, 39; Jubilees 15:31; 23:30; 24:28ff.; 50:5 (D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 1964, pp. 301-303).

In 2 Baruch, as in 4 Ezra, the destruction at the hands of the Babylonians serves as an allegory for the fall of 70 C.E. which was caused because of the sins of the people (cf. 2 Baruch 13-20: dialogue between God and Baruch on the subject of theodicy). The themes which are common in 2 Baruch and Isaiah 56-66 are the emphasis on man's deliberate transgression of the Law as the reason for his damnation (2 Baruch 15:5f.; cf. the motif of sin and punishment in Isa. 59:1-2; 58:1-2; 57:17), the righteous deeds of man will be rewarded in the age to come (2 Baruch 14:7; 15:7f.; 52:3-7;¹⁰⁰ cf. Isa. 58:6-12, 13-14 where the righteous behaviour that could make fasting and sabbath acceptable to YHWH and will enable the people to participate in the era of salvation is stressed; Isa. 59:20; 65:8-10, 13-16), the offering of consolation to Zion¹⁰¹, with reference to the coming judgement of the Gentiles (2 Baruch 81-82; cf. Isa. 63:1-6).

The Apocalypse of Abraham, though it has its own peculiarities and emphases, shares with 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch common concerns about theodicy. The author explains the dilemma of Israel's suffering by means of a theme that runs through the book, the practising or the rejection of idolatry. Chapters 1-8 recount the story of Abraham's conversion from idolatry. The helplessness of idols and the folly of idolatry are demonstrated. In chapter 25 God's idea of the temple and its cult is contrasted with the way in which the people anger him by idolatry and child sacrifice¹⁰². The theme of the condemnation of idolatry and of the cultic defilement is found in Isa. 57:3-13ab; 65:1-7, 11-12.

3 Baruch takes also its point of departure from the specific problem of the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of the Gentiles. The responses the author receives are: the destruction of Jerusalem is punishment for the people's sin; the Gentiles will be punished; the righteous will receive their reward

¹⁰⁰ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 131-132; cf. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, pp. 282-287.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Isa. 60-62; 65:18-24.

¹⁰² Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, pp. 294-299; cf. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 180-186.

(see above parallels with Isaiah 56-66). A difference from 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham lies in 3 Baruch's silence about a future age and a glorified Jerusalem¹⁰³.

The above investigation shows that there are broad similarities of themes between Isaiah 56-66 and the apocalypses.

C) Several of the apocalypses evince an interest in the totality of human history and particularly the history of Israel (Dan. 2; 7; 8-9; 10-12; 1 Enoch 85-90; 91:12-17; 93; 4 Ezra 11-12; Syr. Baruch 36-40; 53-74; Apoc. Abraham 27ff., cf. Life of Adam and Eve 25ff.; Ass. Moses 2-10)¹⁰⁴. The fact that these detailed historical accounts are said to have been revealed to men of old gives the impression that the whole of human history has been foreseen by God and its conclusion determined. Despite the numerous oracles against foreign nations in the prophetic books (e.g. Isa. 10:5, 25; 13-19; 25:10; 29:5-8; 30:27-28, 30-32; 43:14; 47:3; 49:26; Ezek. 25-32; Amos 1:3-2:3) they do not resemble the interest in the totality of history which is found in the apocalypses. After the Exile, however, there has been a concern for the totality of history demonstrating the consequence of disobedience and the divine plan manifesting itself through the whole of history (Deuteronomic History, the Priestly work, and the books of Chronicles)¹⁰⁵. Although the main concern of the apocalypses was the revelation of the divine mysteries they could not be complete without offering some kind of total history. "An orientation towards the future alone would have given a theological picture which minimized divine control of history in the present¹⁰⁶. Apart from the reference to 'Greeks' and the other nations (*Tarshish, Pul, Lud, the drawers of a bow, Tubal and Greeks, the coastlands far away*) in Isa. 66:19 which

¹⁰³ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, pp. 299-303; cf. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp.198-201.

¹⁰⁴ Collins, The Jewish Apocalypses, in *Apocalypse: Morphology, Semeia* 14 (1979), 21-59; idem, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 33-204; Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 136-146.

¹⁰⁵ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 137.

¹⁰⁶ idem, p. 145.

shows a Hellenistic setting¹⁰⁷ there is no total view of history as we find it in Daniel 7-12 (the sequence of Babylonian, Median, and Persian empires and the reference to the coming “prince” of Greece)¹⁰⁸.

D) The eschatological teaching that without YHWH's help the dominance of Israel and the coming of the new age could never be achieved is found in most apocalypses. This teaching together with a pessimistic attitude towards the present world situation, the doctrine of the two ages (the present age is bad and corrupt compared with the new, redemptive age-to-come), and mythological imagery are some of the key elements of apocalyptic eschatology¹⁰⁹. These eschatological elements, however, have been regarded by some scholars as the dominant features of the apocalypses and have been used to describe the apocalyptic pattern of thought¹¹⁰.

The reason for this is the view that the eschatology found in the apocalypses is contrasted with the prophetic one. Though Hanson regards the eschatological material found in the apocalypses as “continuation of prophetic eschatology” he contrasts the hope for the future found in the apocalyptic works with that in the Old Testament prophetic writings¹¹¹. The latter, according to Hanson, stressed the fulfilment of God's purposes within history, whereas apocalyptic eschatology emphasizes the need for intervention of the sovereign YHWH to offer “deliverance out of the present order” which is “bleak” and to create “a new transformed order: *For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind* (Isa. 65:17)”¹¹².

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Steck, *Studien zu Tritojesaja*, pp. 273-274.

¹⁰⁸ J.J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁹ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 26.

¹¹⁰ D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message*, p. 105; W. Schmithals, *The Apocalyptic Movement*, 1975, pp. 21-23, 41-42; Hanson, *Dawn*, 1975; cf. idem, *Apocalypticism*, *IDB Supplement* (1976), pp. 28-31.

¹¹¹ *Apocalypticism*, *IDB Supplement* (1976), p. 30.

¹¹² idem, p. 30; cf. *Dawn*, pp. 11-12.

Though in its eschatological description there are mythological elements, such as, a belief in a new creation and the intervention of YHWH (Divine Warrior myth), Isaiah 56-66 indicates a view of the future which stresses the outworking of YHWH's purposes within history. In the 'new earth' of Isaiah 65, for example, *'the young one shall die a hundred years old, and the one who fails to live to be hundred will be considered accursed'* (v. 20c) and *'the days of my people will be like the days of a tree'* (v. 22b). Life will be transformed, but it will still be distinctly this-worldly (v. 21: *They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit*)¹¹³.

In some of the apocalypses the eschatology is concerned with fulfilment within history and within this world-order. However, in other apocalypses there are signs of a belief that this world would be replaced by a complete new order of existence¹¹⁴.

Regarding its fulfilment within history, the eschatology of Isaiah 56-66 is similar to the eschatology found, for example, in 1 Enoch 1-36 where the hope for the future is centred on the material world:

a) 1 Enoch 1:3 predicts the coming of God to *mount Sinai*. God's coming initiates a period of peace, blessing, and prosperity for the righteous (1 Enoch 1:8) and judgement upon the wicked (1:9). The function of the passage is to give "encouragement to the righteous to persevere in their way of obedience, in order to receive God's reward when he comes in glory"¹¹⁵.

b) 1 Enoch 5 describes the eschatological rewards of the righteous in a this-worldly manner. *For the chosen there will be light and joy and peace, and they will inherit the earth* (5:7). *They will not again do wrong, and they will not be judged*

¹¹³ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 20.

¹¹⁴ For example, in 4 Ezra 7:30ff. the destruction of this world is mentioned: (30) *Then the world shall be turned back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the first beginnings, so that no one shall be left.* (31) *After seven days the world that is not yet awake shall be roused, and that which is corruptible shall perish.* (32) *The earth shall give up those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who rest there in silence; and the chambers shall give up the souls that have been committed to them.* (33) *The Most High shall be revealed on the seat of judgement, and compassion shall pass away, and patience shall be withdrawn.* (34) *Only judgement shall remain....*

¹¹⁵ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 161.

all the days of their life, and they will not die of the divine wrath or anger. But they will complete the number of the days of their life, and their life will grow in peace, and the years of their joy will increase in gladness and in eternal peace all the days of their life (5:9; cf. Isa. 65:17-24).

c) 1 Enoch 22 describes the places where *the souls of the dead* will be kept until the day of judgement (22:4). The righteous have a *spring of water* to refresh them (22:9) whereas the sinners will receive punishment (22:10-11).

d) In 1 Enoch 24-25 Enoch is taken to seven mountains, the seventh of which is surrounded by fragrant trees (24:3). He is told that this mountain is *the throne where God will sit when he comes down to visit the earth for good* (25:3). The most beautiful among the fragrant trees will be given to *the righteous and humble* in the new age (25:4). *From its fruit life will be given to the chosen* (25:5a), and *it will be planted in a holy place, by the house of the Lord* (that is, Sion) (25:5b). *Then they will rejoice with joy and be glad in the holy place; they will each draw the fragrance of it into their bones, and they will live a long life on earth, as your fathers lived, and in their days sorrow and pain and toil and punishment will not touch them* (25:6).

The reference to a new creation in Revelation 21:1 (*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth*) may seem to indicate a dichotomy between the old and the new age in the light of 21:1b (*for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more*). However, in the following verses the new age is described in a this-worldly manner. Life will be centred on the new Jerusalem: (2) *And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* (12) *It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites.* The divine character will be manifested in human lives and achievements and the human beings are not denied: (3) *...He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them.* (6) *To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.* (7) *Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.*

The above-cited passages demonstrate that “the eschatology of the apocalypses looked to YHWH at work in history as the only means of salvation and their authors expected a vindication of their righteousness within the world of men, not in some intangible existence beyond the sphere of history”¹¹⁶.

The direct intervention of YHWH into a world of sin to right all wrongs¹¹⁷ is a main feature in the apocalypses but it hardly characterizes the variety of the contents of the apocalypses (in Isaiah 56-66 occurs in 56:1b; 57:12, 13b; 59:15b-17; 60:1-2, 19-20; 61:2a, 3c, 8, 11; 62:2b, 4a.bα.cα, 5b, 7a, 8, 11; 63:1-6; 63:16; 63:19b-64:2; 65:6-7, 23b-24; 66:4, 15-16).

The word eschatology literally means the doctrine about “the last things”. This definition belongs to the systematic exposition of Christian dogmatics and it covers the study of “the four last things: death, judgement, heaven and hell”¹¹⁸. The Old Testament does not speak of the end of the world, of time, or of history. The term has come to have a wider sense, aided by the fact that it “does not in itself imply a definite content”¹¹⁹. The Old Testament gives some indication of a wider use of the word eschatology meaning expectations for the immediate or not-too-distant future for again and again in the prophecies there are references to the *day of YHWH*, or the formula באחרית הימים *in the last days*. The latter may denote the future in general as well as the last days. “For *future* and *end*, for *later* and *last* Hebrew thought has only one word, *aharit*, just as it has only one word for *prehistoric time* and *the past* (*qedem*) and for *always* and *eternity* (*olam*)”¹²⁰. “The purpose of either phrase (*day of YHWH* and *in the last days*) may be to

¹¹⁶ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, p. 38; cf. pp. 159-160, 189.

¹¹⁷ He will judge the nations and bring about a prosperous future for Israel after the restoration of the present universe, and will punish the wicked and vindicate the righteous.

¹¹⁸ R.P. Carroll, Eschatology, in R.J. Coggins, J.L. Houlden (eds.), *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, 1990, 200.

¹¹⁹ Th.C. Vriezen, Prophecy and Eschatology, *VT Supplement* 1 (1953), 202.

¹²⁰ *idem*, 223.

signal that there is something absolute and final about the action described, a discontinuity with what has gone before”¹²¹.

Thus the origins of eschatology may lie early in Israel’s history, even though its theological explication and intellectual elaboration came late. According to Mowinckel, “in earlier Judaism we may speak of a future hope and a hope of restoration, essentially this-worldly, national, and political in character, but with important religious elements and a tendency to give a mythical other-worldly colouring both to details, and to the divine miracle which will bring it to pass. But we may justifiably speak of an eschatology in later Judaism (that is, apocalyptic eschatology¹²²). ... The change took place in principle when Deutero-Isaiah set the future hope in a new light by the religious character which he gave to it. He based the hope of national restoration entirely on religion, and regarded it as the outward and objective side of religious reality, namely YHWH’s epiphany, His coming as king to triumph over His enemies and establish His kingly rule or kingdom (the day of YHWH)”¹²³.

Under the influence of the Persian dualism (two opposing forces of good and evil, darkness and light) which comes in with the Greek period¹²⁴ the future hope of the earlier prophecy was transformed into a “transcendental” eschatology¹²⁵ “with a more or less systematized didactic character” and with “a tendency” of a learned preoccupation with older prophetic language “that represented a specific tradition of sapientializing, like the intellectual tradition of Wisdom”¹²⁶.

¹²¹ K. Larkin, *The Eschatology of Second Zechariah*, 1994, 13.

¹²² Explanation mine.

¹²³ *He That Cometh*, 1959, p. 261; cf. 125-186.

¹²⁴ S.B. Frost, *OT Apocalyptic*, 1952, pp. 72-77; cf. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 1959, pp. 264-265.

¹²⁵ Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, p. 267.

¹²⁶ M. Saebo, OT Apocalyptic in its Relation to Prophecy and Wisdom, In K. Jeppesen, K. Nielsen, B. Rosendal (eds.), *In The Last Days*, 1994, pp. 90, 91; cf. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 1985, pp. 458-499.

A more detailed exposition of the view that eschatology originated before the exile and in historical expectation was supplied by Th. C. Vriezen¹²⁷ who identified four stages in its growth:

- 1) pre-eschatology (before the classical prophets), which was nationalistic; the future was seen to a great extent in the light of the past, the idealized age of David.
- 2) awakening eschatology (Isaiah and his contemporaries from Amos to Jeremiah) in which a new kind of kingdom embracing the whole world *in the latter days* began to be envisaged.
- 3) actualizing eschatology (the period of Second Isaiah) in which the hope of such a kingdom began to be experienced.
- 4) dualistic, transcendent eschatology, arising from the disappointment of these hopes, and also from the influence of Persian and Hellenistic thought. The actual motifs, however, in which the Jewish apocalypses are expressed are drawn predominantly from Jewish tradition¹²⁸.

Vriezen agrees with Mowinckel that eschatology is an Israelite phenomenon not really found outside Israel, but he denies that it arose when people began to doubt the actuality of the cult; rather “eschatology is the form in which the critical realism of faith of the prophets maintained its confession of YHWH, the Lord of the World”¹²⁹. No single coherent eschatological system appears in the Old Testament but rather a variety of materials, some inconsistent, reflecting distinctive origins, traditions and emphases¹³⁰.

Isaiah 56-66 shares with some of the apocalypses common eschatological beliefs. Nevertheless messianic belief, references to the Son of Man, and resurrection of the dead (Dan. 12:2; cf. 4 Ezra 7:31-32; 2 Baruch 30:2; 42:8; 1 Enoch 51:1; 62:15) or judgement of the dead are not apparent in

¹²⁷ Prophecy and Eschatology, *VT Supplement* 1 (1953), 225-228.

¹²⁸ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, p. 26.

¹²⁹ *idem*, 228, 229.

¹³⁰ R.P. Carroll, Eschatology, in R.J. Coggins, J.L. Houlden (eds.), *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, 1990, 202.

Isaiah 56-66¹³¹. The belief in the resurrection of the dead occurs in the so-called Isaiah Apocalypse (Isa. 24-27) in Isa. 26:19 (*Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise. O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!...the earth will give birth to those long dead*). The context of Isa. 26:19, especially chapters 26-27, describes the gathering of the dispersion (Isa. 27:12-13), the restoration of Israel (Isa. 26:1-3, 15; 27:6), and the defeat of its enemies (Isa. 26:5-6, 11, 20-21; 27:7, 10). These events issue from the judgement of YHWH, who *comes out from its place to punish* Israel's enemies for the innocent *blood they shed* (Isa. 26:21). Some scholars have interpreted this passage in the same way as Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek. 37:1-14) and take it to refer to the restoration of Israel¹³². However the contrast between the raising of the dead of Israel and the fact that their dead overlords will not rise (Isa. 26:14: *The dead do not live; shades do not rise - because you have punished and destroyed them, and wiped out all memory of them*) makes this interpretation "untenable"¹³³. Isaiah 24-27 distinguishes between Israel and its foreign oppressors (*the inhabitants of the earth*: Isa. 24:5, 6, 17; 26:21). YHWH's judgement will issue in punishment for these oppressors and the restoration of Israel. Part of this restoration will include the resurrection of the dead Israelites. YHWH's judgement not only vindicates the righteous; it punishes the wicked, specifically those who have wronged the righteous (Isa. 26:20-21). But the dead wrongdoers stay dead; they do not rise to be judged (Isa. 26:14). In Dan. 12:2, however, resurrection is a means by which both the righteous and the wicked dead receive their respective vindication or punishment (*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some*

¹³¹ Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, pp. 28-29.

¹³² J.J. Collins, *The Jewish Apocalypses*, in *Apocalypse: Morphology*, *Semeia* 14 (1979), 29.

¹³³ G.W.E. Nickelsburg, Jr., *Resurrection, Immortality, and eternal life in Intertestamental Judaism*, 1972, 18; cf. L. Greenspoon, *The Origin of the Idea of Resurrection*, in B. Halpern, J. Levenson (eds.), *Traditions in Transformation*, 284-287.

to shame and everlasting contempt)¹³⁴. In the eschatology of Isa. 24-25 there is also reference in the destruction of death (Isa. 25:7: *And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever*) a theme which is also found in the apocalyptic works (for example, Jub. 23:27-29). In Isa. 24-27 also when YHWH pronounces his judgement the earth is turned upside down (Isa. 24:1: *and he will twist its surface*) and the sun and moon are darkened (Isa. 24:23). In this great cosmic catastrophe even the *host of heaven* is to be punished (Isa. 24:21: *On that day YHWH will punish the host of heaven in heaven, and on earth the kings of the earth*). The belief that before YHWH judges any nation or ruler he first judges the guardian angel whose charge they are is found in 1 Enoch 90:22-28 and 1 Enoch 91:12 (judgement of oppressors), 14 (of the world), and 15 (of the angels) (cf. the belief that the angels receive from God their due recompense in 2 Enoch 4, Jub. 5:14). The theme of a mythical banquet on the holy mountain in Isa. 25:6 is parallel to the so-called “Messianic Banquet” to which reference is made in the Qumran texts (cf. Rule of the Congregation 2:18-22), in the New Testament (cf. Luke 13:28-29; 22:30ff.; Rev. 19:9) and in rabbinic tradition¹³⁵. Some of the major characteristics of apocalyptic eschatology may be recognizable in Isaiah 24-27 as the above-cited themes have shown. However, the oracles in Isaiah 24-27 are presented as direct prophecies, not as visions with interpretations revealed by an otherworldly mediator.

Concluding this part of the Introduction, Hanson is undoubtedly right in his belief that the social world affects the writers of the apocalypses. However, his attention to the model of division and hostility between “parties” leads him to overlook the fact that the various social or

¹³⁴ G.W.E. Nickelsburg, Jr., *Resurrection, Immortality, and eternal life in Intertestamental Judaism*, 1972, 18-19; cf. D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message*, 1964, 368.

¹³⁵ D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message*, 1964, 124.

ideological movements have a similar social, economic, political, or historical reality which lies behind all the apocalyptic documents.

Hanson is also right in his belief that prophecy served as a source for many elements of the eschatology of the apocalypses. But he is wrong in his belief that prophecy is the only source. I believe that I have showed that apocalypses were constituted by a combination of themes and concerns and under the influence of both Jewish and foreign traditions. Eschatology is one of the many concerns of the apocalypses but it is not the only one. Eschatology in the post-exilic period underwent a change under foreign influences and it was transformed into a “transcendental” eschatology.

Before answering the question made in the title of this Thesis (Isaiah 56-66: prophecy or apocalypse?) I have to clarify that I use the term prophecy as a genre term. The term prophecy is an all-embracing term and it refers to the genre, the movement, and the person of the prophet. The structure of the prophetic genre has most frequently the following schema¹³⁶:

- a) Prophet's call.
- b) The messenger's formula (*Thus says YHWH*).
- c) Announcement of judgement (individuals ~ prophet's own nation ~ foreign nations).
- d) Admonitions.
- e) Words of salvation.

Isaiah 56-66 is not an apocalypse. It shares with the apocalyptic literature common eschatological beliefs and like the eschatology of the apocalypses its eschatology (that is, the expectations for the future) is the product of the learned study of the scripture. Although some major defining characteristics of apocalyptic thought are lacking the judgement that this work is apocalyptic in outlook, based on its affinities with apocalypses, is plausible.

¹³⁶ Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 1967.

2) Critical Review of the works published in the last ten years, on Isaiah 56-66

In the last ten years different methodological approaches have been applied to the study of the book of Isaiah in the attempt to reveal its unity. Following a change in the view of the redactors of the whole book of Isaiah, from that of a mechanical collector to a creative editor, recent studies on the growth of the Third-Isaianic texts have been inspired by redactional criticism and have focused on the origin, date, authorship, and layeredness of the heterogeneous material in Isa. 56-66.

Influenced by a general consensus on the redaction of the book of Isaiah, from that of a collection to a redactionally unified whole, expressed by H. Barth¹³⁷, J. Vermeylen¹³⁸, R. Clements¹³⁹, and R. Rendtorff¹⁴⁰, Marvin Sweeney's work *Isaiah 1-4 and the Post-exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition* (1988) is a preliminary attempt to understand the redactional formation of the book of Isaiah by focusing especially on Isa. 1-4, the examination of which leads Sweeney to see that a number of authors and redactors are operative in the formation of this material over a period of three centuries or more, between 701 and mid-to late-fifth century B.C.E. On the basis of thematic, literary, and structural resemblances between the three parts of the book of Isaiah (First-Isaiah, Second-Isaiah, and Third Isaiah¹⁴¹), Sweeney builds his thesis, that Isaiah as a whole book has been shaped into a redactional unity, on the following evidence: a) the oracle against Babylon (Isa. 13:1-14:23) serves as a major thematic link between Isa. 1-39 and Isa. 40-66; b) the rather different

¹³⁷ *Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit*, 1977.

¹³⁸ *Du Prophete Isaie a l'Apocalyptique: Isaie, I-XXXV*, (2 vols.) 1977-78.

¹³⁹ The Unity of the Book of Isaiah, *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 117-129, and Beyond Tradition History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah's Themes, *JSOT* 31 (1985), 95-113.

¹⁴⁰ Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja, *VT* 34, (1984), 295-320.

¹⁴¹ In fact, he regards Isa. 55-66 as a sub-unit within, and serving as a conclusion to, Isa. 40-66.

depiction of Hezekiah in Isaiah 36-39 from 2 Kings 18-20. The differences between the two texts are not the result of accidental scribal inconsistency in transmitting these texts. Rather, the writer of the Isaiah text, according to Sweeney, wanted to idealize the character of Hezekiah; c) Isa. 35 serves as transitional chapter between Isa. 1-39 and Isa. 40-66; d) the relationship between Isa. 1 and the rest of the book, especially Isa. 65-66; and e) the way in which the presentation of material in Isa. 1-39 reflects the concerns of post-exilic Judaism, particularly its concern to understand the destruction of Jerusalem, the Babylonian exile, and the post-exilic restoration¹⁴².

The examination of the book of Isaiah as a whole demonstrates that it functions as an “Exhortation to the people of Jerusalem/Judah to return to YHWH as their God”¹⁴³, which Sweeney sees as most appropriate to the needs of the mid- to late-fifth century B.C.E. Jewish community in Jerusalem. “It is directed to the post-exilic Jewish population in general and attempts to convince them that YHWH is the God of all creation, that His covenant with them is still in effect, and that it is still necessary for them to adhere to Him as God and fulfil His requirements. The book is structured to serve this purpose”¹⁴⁴.

According to Sweeney, the first section, Isa. 1-39, is the product of the final redaction of the entire book of Isaiah. Although Isa. 1-39 undoubtedly contains a great deal of material stemming from Isaiah ben Amoz and other writers, the final form of these chapters is composed, structured, and understood in relation to the second section, Isa. 40-66. “Isa. 1-39 is presented as the preface which looks forward to Isa. 40-66, and Isa. 40-66 is presented as the completion which presupposes Isa. 1-39”¹⁴⁵.

Concerning the relationship between Isa. 56-66 and the rest of the book, Sweeney is content to compare only the denunciation of idolatrous

¹⁴² *Isaiah 1-4*, pp. 11-25.

¹⁴³ *idem*, p. 98.

¹⁴⁴ *idem*, pp. 185-6.

¹⁴⁵ *idem*, p. 7.

practices in 65:3 to that in 1:29-31. According to him, both refer to ‘gardens’ as the location where such practices were carried on (cf. also 66:17). Likewise 65:12 shares with 1:11 and 29 the theme of false choice, choosing (בחר) that in which the worshippers themselves, not God, delight (חפץ; cf. 66:3). The figurative language used in 65:22, in which the days of God’s chosen ones are compared to the days of a tree, may be seen as a deliberate contrast with the rotten tree in 1:30-31 which symbolizes those who were guilty of apostasy. “These observations demonstrate”, according to Sweeney, “that the imagery of Isa. 1:29-31 permeates all of Isa. 65-66 and indicate that the writers of Isa. 65-66 employed the imagery and language of this oracle in presenting their views on the coming punishment of the apostates and triumph of the elect”¹⁴⁶. And he concludes that Isa. 1 and Isa. 65-66 form a redactional “envelope” around the entire book of Isaiah which suggests that these chapters were composed or placed in their present positions as part of the final redaction of the book¹⁴⁷. Sweeney does not discuss the relationship between Isa. 1:10-20 and 58:1-14, Isa. 1:21-23 and 59:1-15a, Isa. 1:24-25 and 59:15b-20, Isa. 60-62 and 1:26-27+2:2-5 (see below the discussion of the text)¹⁴⁸.

Contrary to those scholars who consider Isa. 55 or 55:6-13 as the epilogue for the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah in chapters 40-55, Sweeney argues that “Isa. 55 differs formally from the preceding material in that it begins with an introductory *hoy* following the summary appraisal form which concludes chapter 54. This *hoy* is not intended to refer to a woe speech but

¹⁴⁶ *idem*, pp. 23-24.

¹⁴⁷ *idem*, p. 196.

¹⁴⁸ These observations are the result of Vermeylen’s work on the book of Isaiah. His explanation of these links between Isaiah 56-66 and all that precedes is based on the theory that the first edition of Isaiah 56-66 (56:9-57:2; 57:3-13; 57:14-20; 58:1-14; 59:1-15a; 59:15b-20; 60-62) was constructed according to the concerns and pattern of Isaiah 1:1-2:5 (L’Unité du Livre d’Isaïe, in Vermeylen (ed.) *The Book of Isaiah*, pp. 43-44, which builds on his earlier work *Du Prophète Isaïe à l’Apocalyptique*, II, 1977-78, pp. 504-517). However this scheme leaves 63:7-64:11 and 65:16-66:14a without any corresponding sections in Isa. 1:1-2:5.

serves as an exclamation to attract the attention of the listener or reader. In any case..., it serves as the introduction to chapters 56-66, forming a “bridge” between chapters 40-54 and 56-66. Isa. 55-66 would then serve as the conclusion to Isa. 40-66”¹⁴⁹. Sweeney regards chapters 56-66 as a united section, on the basis of their focus on the nature of the reconstituted covenant community and the requirements for those who will participate in it. On broad thematic grounds, Sweeney identifies three major blocks of material within these chapters: 56-59, 60-62, and 63-66. Isa. 56-59 sets forth YHWH’s requirements for covenant membership and stresses that the people must turn to Him in order to receive His deliverance. The position of chapters 60-62 after the preceding chapters shows what those who accept YHWH’s covenant, and do what He desires, can expect. The unit therefore is seen by Sweeney to serve as a motivation for the people to accept YHWH’s stipulations and participate in His covenant. The final section, Isa. 63-66, is demarcated thematically from the proclamation of salvation which precedes by its focus on the process of selecting those who will participate in the new covenant and those who will perish. The label for the section of Isa. 55-66 should therefore be, according to Sweeney, “Exhortation to Join the New Covenant Community”¹⁵⁰.

In the conclusion of his work, Sweeney underscores the distinction between the authorial intention of original words and redactional intentions. According to him, “this indicates that there must be a generic distinction between the “message” which the original texts contain, i.e. the original meaning of the text within itself, and the systematic conception or teaching of the book as a whole, i.e. the meaning of the text as a constitutive element of a larger system”¹⁵¹. Sweeney’s actual treatment of the text of Isaiah 56-66 (and the whole book of Isaiah) is emaciated

¹⁴⁹ *idem*, p. 88.

¹⁵⁰ *idem*, pp. 88-92.

¹⁵¹ *idem*, p. 199.

because of his reliance on a few criteria¹⁵² that presume a very narrowly limited vision of the text. Sweeney's emphasis on syntactical criteria of connectedness or contrast between the structural units causes him to give no attention to other intertextual thematic connections (apart from the message that YHWH is all-powerful, that He controls the entire world as well as His own people) that weave the book together.

The redactional complexity and layeredness of the book of Isaiah has become the object of Odil Hannes Steck's continuing analysis, formerly published in various periodicals and series and recently collected and edited in one work¹⁵³.

Steck attempts to offer an answer to the question on the origin of Third Isaiah texts with reference to the growth of the book of Isaiah as a whole. According to him, the material of Isaiah 56-66 never existed independently of the book of Isaiah as the separate words of a prophet Third Isaiah, but rather derived from a series of redactional amplifications (Fortschreibungen) of Isa. 1-39 and 40-55 during the gradually developing book of Isaiah as a whole. Steck speaks of "Querverbindungen" (inter-connections) and "interrelations" in the entire book of Isaiah¹⁵⁴.

The successive layers, which betray the prolongation of this redactional process, date from the first half of the fifth down to the early third century. Steck discovers four redactional strata in the progress of which Third Isaiah comes to its present final form.

The first one is Isa. 60-62, in which Steck distinguishes five sub-literary strata. The earliest of these, namely, (I) 60:1-9, 13-16; 61:1-11, as

¹⁵² E.g. the conjunction *waw* in Isa. 57:14 (p. 90), the introductory *hoy* in Isa. 55:1 (p. 88), the YHWH speech formula in Isa. 56:1 (p. 89) and Isa. 58:14bβ (p. 90), dual question and answer format in Isa. 63:1-6 (p. 91), the second person feminine singular address in Isa. 60-62 (p. 90), the first person orientation in 63:7-64:12 (p. 91), YHWH speech formulae in Isa. 65-66 (p. 91).

¹⁵³ *Studien zu Tritojesaja*, BZAW 203, 1991.

¹⁵⁴ Tritojesaja im Jesajabuch, *Studien*, pp. 3-45, (first published in J. Vermeylen (ed.) *The Book of Isaiah. Le livre d'Isaie. Les oracles et leurs relectures. Unite et complexite de l'ouvrage*, Leuven 1989, pp. 361-406.

subsequently supplemented by (II) 60:10-11 and 62:1-7, constitutes, he argues, the first of the four amplifications (Fortschreibungen) of Isaiah 40-55 before it was joined to the book of Isaiah 1-39. This explains, according to Steck, why (unlike the rest of Isaiah 56-66) 60:1-9, 13-16; 61:1-11; 60:10-11; 62:1-7 do not present significant echoes of Isaiah 1-39¹⁵⁵. Following R.G.Kratz¹⁵⁶, Steck further suggests that perhaps this earlier stratum within Isa. 60-62 stems from the hand responsible for the “Servant-Israel strand” identified by Kratz in Isa. 40-55¹⁵⁷. The other sub-literary strata within Isa. 60-62 are the following: (III) 62:10-12, deriving from the “Heimkehrredaktion”; (IV) 60:17-22, *61:2, and 62:8-9, deriving from the “vorletzten Redaktion”; and (V) 60:12a, *61:3, deriving from the final redactor of the book, active between 302/1 and 270 B.C.¹⁵⁸.

The conclusion/culmination of the second layer which he calls “Heimkehrredaktion” (Return-redaction) and which assembled the complex Isaiah 1-62 and dates from 312/311 B.C., is found by Steck in Isa. 62:10-12¹⁵⁹. This redaction was responsible, according to Steck, for the joining of Isaiah 1-39 and Isaiah 40-55, 60-62 into a single work, by means of the addition of Isaiah 11:11-16, 27:12-13, and 35. The line of message of this redaction is the judgement of YHWH and the return of the people of God which is depicted a) in Isa. 11:11-16 (return) and 13:(1-4.)5-16.(17ff) (judgement); b) 27:13 (return) and 24-27 (judgement); c) 34:(1.)2-4.(5ff) (judgement) and 35 (return); and d) 51:1-3.4f.6-8.(9-10a.)10b-11 (return and judgement)¹⁶⁰.

The third redactional layer is traced in Isa. 56:9-58:12.14b β , 59:1-21, 60:17-22, *61:2, 62:8-9, and 63:1-6, and ascribed by Steck to the “penultimate redaction” (vorletzten Redaktion) of the book of Isaiah

¹⁵⁵ Tritojesaja im Jesajabuch, *Studien*, pp. 14-19.

¹⁵⁶ *Kyros im Deuterjesaja-Buch. Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Theologie von Jes. 40-55*, 1991.

¹⁵⁷ Zu jungsten Untersuchungen von Jes. 60-62, *Studien*, pp. 135-139.

¹⁵⁸ Tritojesaja im Jesajabuch, *Studien*, pp. 14-19, 20-27; cf. the table on pp. 278-279.

¹⁵⁹ Jes. 62:10-12 als Abschluss eines Grossjesajabuches, *Studien*, pp. 143-166.

¹⁶⁰ *idem*, p. 157.

working in the last decade of the fourth century B.C., before the capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I (302/1 B.C.) and emphasizing the need for repentance if YHWH's long-awaited judgement of the nations is ever to be activated¹⁶¹.

In his article *Beobachtungen zu Jesaja 56–59*¹⁶², following the studies of Gregory J. Polan and W.A.M. Beuken, Steck argued that Isa. 56–59 fit into a sequential literary unit and should not be separated from the text that precedes and follows them. Thus 59:21 serves as a link to the material that follows it. Themes of salvation-sharing and eschatology are seen as continuous with what preceded and follows¹⁶³.

In Steck's redactional conception Isa. 56:1–8, 63:7–66:24 (together with 58:13–14b α , 60:12a, *61:3) derive from the final redactor of the book of Isaiah. More specifically, he holds that the prayer in 63:7–64:11 was composed shortly after the devastation of Jerusalem in 302/1 by Ptolemy I¹⁶⁴, while 56:1–8; 65:1–66:24 represent a “correction”, announcing YHWH's coming vindication of the pious among both Jews and Gentiles, of the expectations voiced by that prayer and dating from sometime between 300 and 270 B.C.¹⁶⁵.

Some years ago, in his article *Beobachtungen zur Anlage von Jes. 65–66*¹⁶⁶, Steck maintained that Isaiah 65–66 was written as a conclusion to the book of Isaiah as a whole. While these chapters need to be seen in relation to their immediate context (Isa. 63:7–64:11) their connections with the entire book are undoubted. Isaiah 65–66 recapitulate important themes of the rest of the book.

Steck's work is, in fact, an over-emphasizing classification of redactional strata in the book of Isaiah and scrutiny of their author and date. It is true that for a complete picture of the nature and significance of the material

¹⁶¹ Zu jungsten Untersuchungen von Jes. 56:9–59:21; 63:1–6, *Studien*, pp. 192–213.

¹⁶² *BZ* 31 (1987), pp. 228–246, *Studien*, pp. 169–186.

¹⁶³ *idem*, p. 185.

¹⁶⁴ Zu jungsten Untersuchungen von Jes. 56:1–8; 63:7–66:24, *Studien*, p. 236.

¹⁶⁵ *idem*, p. 229.

¹⁶⁶ *BN* 38/39, 1987, pp. 103–116, *Studien*, pp. 217–228.

in Isaiah 56-66 it has to be seen as the result of literary activity and in relation to the development of the book of Isaiah as a whole. However, the great complexity of the material in his reconstruction is difficult to justify in terms of literary or historical criteria¹⁶⁷.

Another recent redaction-critical investigation is that of Seizo Sekine¹⁶⁸, who seeks to challenge Elliger's argument¹⁶⁹ for literary and authorial unity in Isaiah 56-66, a position Sekine respects and feels has never been sufficiently set aside on primarily literary grounds. Sekine establishes through minute analysis a clear redactional hand at work in Isaiah 56-66, particularly in the opening and closing chapters.

Sekine's study comprises two parts. The first part is an assignment of texts to "Grundschrift A" (Third Isaiah=57:14-15b α ,16-18b α ,19b β ; 60:1-22; 61:1-11; 62:1-12; 65:16b-23,25; 66:7-16, dating between 519 and 515 B.C.E.), "Grundschrift B" (a group of ten anonymous, independent texts=63:7-10, dating before 538 B.C.E.; 59:1-15a; 63:11b-64:3,9-11; 64:4b-8; 66:1-4, dating between 538 and 515; and 56:1-5a α ,5b α ; 56:9-57:13a; 58:3-14; 63:1-6; 65:2-16a, dating after 515), and to a final redactor (56:5a β ,5b β ,6-8; 57:13b,15b β . γ ,18b β -19b α ,20f.; 58:1f.; 59:15b-21; 63:11a; 64:4a; 65:1,24; 66:5f,17,18-24)¹⁷⁰. The second part is an examination of thirteen concepts (1. salvation, 2. mercy, 3. blessing, 4. covenant, 5. judgement, 6. holiness, 7. glory, 8. God, 9. sin, 10. good and wicked, 11. people, 12. history, and 13. eschatology) which Sekine traces in "Grundschrift A", "Grundschrift B", and in the "redactional Schicht"¹⁷¹.

According to Sekine, Isaiah 56-66 is the product of a final redactor, whose theological views are consistent and fully formed, who respected the

¹⁶⁷ E.g. his dating of the lament in 63:7-64:11 during the activity of Ptolemy I in 302/301 B.C. raises difficulties because of the silence of the sources about any desecration of the temple at that time.

¹⁶⁸ *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung (Jes. 56-66) redaktionsgeschichtlich untersucht*, BZAW 175, 1989.

¹⁶⁹ In his work *Die Einheit des Tritojesaja (Jes. 56-66)*, BWANT 45, 1928.

¹⁷⁰ *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, pp. 31-178.

¹⁷¹ *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, pp. 182-237.

integrity of the texts he inherited, including those he disagreed with and modified, and to whom Sekine repeatedly ascribes great literary skills.

Following the general consensus (Kessler, Westermann, Pauritsch), Sekine regards Isa. 56:1-8 and 66:18-24 as forming a redactional framework to the whole, and chapters 60-62 as central to the teaching of the individual person (Einzelperson) known as Third Isaiah¹⁷².

First, the redactor bound Isa. 56:1-5a α ,b α , dating after 515 B.C., together with his own addition Isa. 56:5a β ,b β ,6-8 setting them in the beginning of the book. He sponsored a “universalistic theology” opposed to the “nationalism” of those who drew on Deut. 23:3-5 to exclude foreigners. He wanted to make clear that the proselytes who had been excluded from the community ought to be re-admitted. The redactor worked in the latter half of the fifth century or the first half of the fourth century, as Sekine determines from Ezra and Nehemiah¹⁷³.

The redactor, according to Sekine, incorporated and sometimes modified the texts of ten different authors, including those of “Third- Isaiah”, a prophet who preached salvation to the early restoration community; his texts are preserved in chapters 60-62; 57:14-19 (with the redactor’s modifications); 65:16b-23,25; 66:7-16. The core of his preaching is in chapters 60-62, in which Sekine finds no evidence of the redactor’s hand. Sekine argues that Third Isaiah’s optimistic announcement in chapter 60 encounters opposition from sceptics. His response in chapter 61 challenged the community to be the “humble in spirit” who wait expectantly on YHWH. Finally, in chapter 62, Third Isaiah himself protested God’s silence. Complementing this development, Third Isaiah’s thought “became gradually universalistic”: while chapter 60 speaks of the destruction and disgrace of the nations, chapter 62 does not even mention them¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷² *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, p. 57.

¹⁷³ *idem*, pp. 41-42, 66, 228.

¹⁷⁴ *idem*, p. 103; Sekine has overlooked the hostile attitude to the nations found in Isaiah 62:8-9 (see below in the discussion of Isaiah 62:1-12).

The redactor continued this development, bringing Third Isaiah's voice to bear on a later situation. The redactor also adapted texts from ten additional authors (Grundschrift B) to make his own point that "the other side of universalism" is a critique of Israel, and that finally

- a) salvation depends solely on YHWH's gracious action, apart from human piety (65:1, 24);
- b) it is promised to whoever trusts in YHWH, regardless of their nationality (57:13b);
- c) this trust is evident and has its content in the practice of social justice (chapter 58)¹⁷⁵.

Sekine's discovery in these texts of a theologically consistent core that can be plausibly ascribed to one author (Third Isaiah), and, in the remaining texts, evidence of a theologically consistent reinterpretation (the redactor), enables him to read Isa. 56-66 as a complex piece of literary rhetoric making a cumulative argument. That is a notable achievement for a redactional analysis. However, Sekine's focus only upon the redactional development of Isaiah 56-66 as an independent collection apart from the rest of the book of Isaiah sets a methodological question mark over his study which pays no attention to the similarity of concepts between Isaiah 56-66 and the rest of the book of Isaiah.

In contrast to the work done by O.H. Steck, Koenen's detailed redaction-critical study of Isaiah 56-66¹⁷⁶ is an investigation of the development of these chapters with little reference to the growth of the book of Isaiah as a whole. His two-sided effort is, on the one hand, to classify the texts which derive from one and the same author or several authors, and on the other hand, to identify the place, the date, the author of the particular strata in the text, and the theological purpose for which the texts were written. According to Koenen, the consideration of certain criteria on the basis of a literary-critical estimation would protect the exegetes from arbitrary

¹⁷⁵ *idem*, pp. 228-233.

¹⁷⁶ *Ethik und Eschatologie im Tritojesajabuch. Eine literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie*, WMANT 62, 1990.

decisions. Obviously influenced by P. Hanson's reconstruction of the early post-exilic community situation¹⁷⁷, his criteria for the distinction of the strata in Isa. 56-66 are internal tensions and linguistic and stylistic differences.

Koenen suggests that these chapters were redacted in the late fifth and early fourth centuries B.C. The redactor drew on the work of Third Isaiah, and on two independent, self-contained, pre-existing texts not from Third Isaiah, the first one concerning YHWH's judgement-speech (Isa. 56:9-12*) and the second one the people's lament (Isa. 63:7-64:11), and adapted this material by means of his own additions.

The first basic stratum in Isaiah 56-66 consists of Isa. 57:14-19*; 58:3-12; 59:1-15a*; 60:1-18*; 61:1-4.5-6 (and 7-9); 62:1-7.8-9*.10-12; 65:16b-24; 66:1-2; 66:7-9.10-14a¹⁷⁸. These texts date between 520 and 515 B.C. and derive from the "scribal prophet" Third Isaiah, a disciple of Second-Isaiah and deal with the question, in the light of the misery of the post-exilic period, of the failure of the redemptive promises of Second Isaiah¹⁷⁹. According to Koenen, Third Isaiah's answer to this question is double-sided. On the one hand, the ethical sins in the community prevent the coming of salvation (in contrast to Haggai and Zechariah, Third Isaiah rejects the rebuilding of the Temple as the presupposition of salvation in 66:1f.), and on the other hand, he assures the people that the salvation certainly will come. The transition from the time of darkness to the time of light is yet to come. Jerusalem will soon become a rich city, and all the nations will serve it¹⁸⁰. With the comparison of the two ages, between the negative situation in the present and the creation of new heavens and new earth in the future (65:17), Third Isaiah, according to Koenen, belongs to the forerunners of the apocalyptic teaching of the two-aeons¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁷ *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 1975, second edition 1979.

¹⁷⁸ *Ethik und Eschatologie*, p. 215.

¹⁷⁹ *idem*, pp. 215-217.

¹⁸⁰ *idem*, pp. 156-157.

¹⁸¹ *idem*, pp. 220-221.

The second stratum in the book of Third Isaiah consists of Isa. 56:1.2.3-8.11aβ.b; 57:1f.3-13a*.13b.17-18aα.20f.; 58:1f.13f.; 59:13a.15b-20*; 60:6bβ.7b.9b.10b.13b.21; 61:10-11; 62:aβ.bβ; 63:1-6; 65:1-7*.8-15*.16a*; 66:3f.5f.14b-17*.18-22*¹⁸². These texts are attributed to a redactor working in the second half of the fifth century and the first half of the fourth century. The redactor collected Third Isaiah's texts and combined them with several additions. He connected chapters 60, 61, and 62 through Isa. 60:21 and 61:10f. He placed also Isa. 58 and 59 under the heading of Isa. 58:1. To those who ignore the warning which follows after the heading, YHWH comes for judgement (59:15b-20; 63:1-6). However, to those who return, salvation comes (59:20). Third Isaiah had imagined with his description of salvation the new time of light, which would follow on after the present time of darkness. The redactor took up this description of salvation, applying it to those willing to return. It does not any more concern the salvation of Jerusalem but the salvation of the righteous ones. According to Koenen, sin and judgement, darkness and light portray not two epochs but two groups¹⁸³.

During the latter half of the fourth century, the administrations of Ezra and Nehemiah, under whom a policy of expulsion of foreigners had led to a division within the community, the redactor understood himself to be the spokesman for the foreigners and their sympathizers¹⁸⁴. He opposed the policies of Ezra and Nehemiah, believing that foreigners ought to be accepted into the community¹⁸⁵.

Therefore, in the first part of Isa. 56-66, the two quarrelling groups are identified by the redactor as "righteous" and "wicked" (Isa. 56:2-57:21); in the second part, as repentant Israelites and the enemies coming from Edom (Isa. 58:1-63:6); and in the third part clearly, according to Koenen, a divided community is reflected in Isa. 63:7-66:17 within which the redactor is working.

¹⁸² *idem*, pp. 239, 222.

¹⁸³ *idem*, p. 157.

¹⁸⁴ *Ethik*, pp. 223-224.

¹⁸⁵ *Ethik*, p. 236.

The redactor worked out the above-mentioned texts and employed them as a continuation to the book of Second Isaiah, stressing their ethical character.

Receiving traditional motifs, he depicts his adversaries as faithless leaders and abominable idolaters through the addition of Isa. 65:3-5a.11; 66. They are the wicked (57:20f) and those who come from Edom (63:1-6), comparable with the enemies of YHWH, who will be destroyed by his appearance. The redactor applies the message of Third Isaiah to the pious. Only they will enjoy the time of salvation, during which all the peoples of the world will come to the Temple to serve YHWH.

Third Isaiah and the redactor stress that righteousness is the criterion for participation in God's coming salvation. During the time of need, Third Isaiah's answer to the question of the fulfilment of the redemptive promises of Second Isaiah was that firstly, all the wrong-doing would have had to have ceased. In the time of the division of the community, the redactor's answer to the question of the identity of the ones who will receive the salvation promised by Third Isaiah is that all the wicked will be destroyed, whereas all the righteous -either Israelites or Gentiles- will see salvation¹⁸⁶.

Koenen's approach is, in fact, like Hanson's one some years ago, a reconstruction of the early post-exilic situation and has tended to politicize and polarize the biblical material.

Concerning the redaction-critics' attempt to date the individual texts in Isa. 56-66, the sheer divergence of scholarly views indicates the ambiguity and uncertainty of the evidence. One of the difficulties lies in the incompleteness of our knowledge of the historical situation in the post-exilic period.

The tendency of the redactional criticism to attribute Isa. 56-66 to elusive redactional strata is a controversial one, because of its lack of entirely reliable and consistent criteria. In effect, the redactional method has

¹⁸⁶ *idem*, p. 240.

relegated the texts to atomization and polarization. Ascribing individual verses or sections to particular authors the redactional approaches lay emphasis on the fragmentation, incoherence and diversity of the material in Isaiah 56-66. It is still necessary to outline the literary criteria concerning the coherence and the individual character of the material in Isaiah 56-66, first, on its own terms, and second, in terms of the development of the book of Isaiah as a whole defining the differing viewpoints or concerns which played a part in the reinterpretation of the earlier parts of the book of Isaiah.

Other recent studies have focused on the thematic and intertextual unity of the overall Isaiah tradition. This has produced a number of productive insights into distinctive themes occurring across various strata of the book, and places where certain parts of the book seem to allude to other parts of the book. The literary, thematic, and theological unity is the object of the following works on Isaiah.

In his article *Isaiah 1-66: Making Sense of the Whole*¹⁸⁷ Christopher Seitz challenges the notion of three independent collections in the book of Isaiah¹⁸⁸. Seitz points out three objections: a) There is only one superscription for the entire collection calling the whole book a “vision of Isaiah which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem”, during the reigns of four kings of the eighth and seventh centuries (Isa. 1:1). b) There is only one call-narrative of a prophet in the book (i.e. Isaiah, in Isa. 6). c) The literary boundaries between First, Second, and Third Isaiah are not clear in any special way¹⁸⁹.

¹⁸⁷ In Chr. Seitz (ed.), *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*, Philadelphia 1988, pp. 105-126.

¹⁸⁸ R. Clements has already argued against the assumption that the unity of the book is a unity based on authorship (The Unity of the Book of Isaiah, *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 117ff.). Clements conceives the unity of the book as a redactional unity and he has noted a number of thematic and textual connections between the first and second parts of the book (Beyond Tradition History, *JSOT* 31 (1985), 95-113).

¹⁸⁹ Seitz, *Reading*, p. 109.

According to Seitz, Isaiah is “startlingly absent not just from Second and Third Isaiah collections—he does not put in much of an appearance in First Isaiah, the collection attributed to him”¹⁹⁰. Seitz speaks of “retraction of the prophetic persona” which permits the book of Isaiah to grow as it does without causing obvious readership problems. And he concludes “this feature of the book of Isaiah also allows the subject of the story - God - to overshadow so completely the prophetic mediator or narrative voice”¹⁹¹.

Seitz regards Zion as the second major character alongside God, in the book. The book of Isaiah, according to him, might be called “The Drama of God and Zion”¹⁹².

The literary approach to the book of Isaiah as a whole is the object of Barry Webb’s study *Zion in Transformation. A Literary Approach to Isaiah*¹⁹³. His thesis is that the transformation of Zion is the key to both the formal and the thematic structure of the book as a whole. According to Webb, the book has a balanced, seven-part structure. A central unit (chapters 36-39) is structured in such a way as to provide the transition from the first half of the book, which is dominated by the Assyrian crisis, to the second half, which is dominated by the Babylonian crisis. This central transition unit is preceded by three units (chapters 1-12, 13-27, and 28-35) each of which ends with the praises of YHWH being sung in or *en route* to the new Zion. It is followed by three units (40:1-51, 11; 51:12-55:13 and chapters 56-66) which end in the same way. The recurring theme, according to Webb, is that Zion’s security is to be found not in foreign alliances, but in reliance upon YHWH. “The vision of the book moves, in fact, from the historical Jerusalem of the eighth century (under judgement) to the new Jerusalem of the eschaton, which is the centre of the new cosmos and symbol of the new age. To this new Jerusalem the nations come (66:18-21; 60:1-22) so that ultimately the nations find their salvation in Zion and

¹⁹⁰ *idem*, p. 117.

¹⁹¹ *idem*, p. 121.

¹⁹² *idem*, p. 122.

¹⁹³ In: D.J.A. Clines, S.E. Fowl, S.E. Porter (eds.), *The Bible in Three Dimensions. Essays in celebration of forty years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, Sheffield 1990, pp. 65-84.

not vice versa. It is this sustained focus on the significance of Zion that gives the vision its theological cohesion”¹⁹⁴.

Webb detects in the book the concept of a purified remnant which becomes the nucleus of the new Zion of the eschaton. In Isa. 1-12 the remnant is the community of the new, eschatological Zion that will emerge on “*that day*” (12:1) beyond judgement. In Isa. 13-27 the remnant idea at first assumes a more negative aspect as the focus shifts temporarily to the nations. The unit, like the previous one, ends with two eschatological songs of praise sung by the saved remnant in Zion (26-27). In Isa. 28-35 there is no use of the remnant idea with respect to surrounding nations. It is used, however, of Jerusalem/Judah. Isa. 36-39 as a whole closes with no remnant (*nothing left*) of the royal treasury, and the remnants of the Davidic house (*some of [Hezekiah’s] sons*) not ‘*going forth*’ but being ‘*taken away*’ from the city to Babylon (39:5-8). In Isa. 40:1-51:11 there is a shift of the remnant concept to the exiles. The return of the exiles is viewed in eschatological terms, and the unit ends, like those in the first half of the book (1-35), with the inhabitants of the new Zion singing YHWH’s praise (51:11). In Isa. 51:12-55:13 there is not explicit use of remnant language, but at the end of chapter 55 the saved remnant returns to Zion with singing (55:12-13). In Isa. 56-66 one final development in the remnant concept takes place. With chapter 56 (56:2; 57:1, 20-21), a distinction begins to be drawn within the restored community between the righteous and the wicked, and a gap opens up between the return and the eschaton. The righteous within the community are those who ‘*take refuge in YHWH*’ (57:13b) and ‘*those in Jacob who turn away from transgression*’ (59:20). They call themselves YHWH’s ‘*servants*’ (63:17) and are so owned by YHWH himself in 65:8-9. There then follows 65:13-16 a series of five antitheses in the form ‘*my servants... but you...*’ in which YHWH pronounces blessing on those who are his servants and curses on those who are not. This litany of blessing and curse leads significantly to an eschatological climax in 65:17-25 where the new order comes to

¹⁹⁴ *idem*, pp. 71-72.

fruition in a new creation centred on a new Zion inhabited by those whom YHWH owns as ‘*my people*’ (verse 19). So in this closing unit of the book, according to Webb, there is a final shifting of the *restored* remnant to produce the *eschatological* remnant, described distributively as YHWH’s ‘*servants*’ and collectively as his ‘*people*’, with the climax of this process reached in 65:17-25¹⁹⁵.

The process by which the eschatological remnant is finally produced is represented in the book by a variety of metaphors. The holy seed (66:7-9), the Immanuel child (Isa. 7), the foundation stone (28:16), the messianic figure (1-35) and the suffering servant figure (40-55) are all metaphors for the faithful remnant. It is the emergence of this remnant, according to Webb, which is the key to Zion’s transformation, and hence to the transformation of the cosmos¹⁹⁶.

In a series of articles Wim Beuken has stated his position with regard to the book of Isaiah as a whole. He is interested in Third Isaiah’s relations to First and Second Isaiah which he describes as “Isaianic legacy”¹⁹⁷. But he sees in Third Isaiah “a literary and theological personality in his own right”, who is the successor of Second Isaiah and, in a certain sense, also of First Isaiah, and who “has used the prophecies of First Isaiah and Second Isaiah for his particular message, in a situation that was quite different”¹⁹⁸.

In his article *Servant and Herald of Good Tidings. Isaiah 61 as an Interpretation of Isaiah 40-55*¹⁹⁹, Beuken attempts to discover the identity of the prophet Third Isaiah, as this is described by references to the prophecies of Second Isaiah (Isa. 40-55). According to his conclusion, “the prophet” of chapter 61 describes his task in terms derived not only from the second Servant

¹⁹⁵ *idem*, pp. 72-81.

¹⁹⁶ *idem*, pp. 81-84.

¹⁹⁷ Isa. 56:9-57:13—An Example of the Isaianic Legacy of Third Isaiah, in: J.W. van Henten, H.J. de Jonge, P.T. van Rooden, J.W. Wesselious (ed.), *Tradition and Re-interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, Leiden 1986, pp. 48-64.

¹⁹⁸ *idem*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁹ In: J. Vermeylen (ed.), *The Book of Isaiah, Le Livre d’Isaie*, Leuven 1989, pp. 411-440.

Song (Isa. 49:1-6), but also from the prologue of Second Isaiah (Isa. 40). The prophet who can be discerned in 40:6-8, who is also the Herald of good Tidings in 40:10-11 and who has gradually become the Servant, is an actual figure, to be recognised and welcomed in chapter 61. However he is not an identical copy of the Servant. He describes his own mission in terms derived from that of the Servant, but essential elements of the latter are missing: utterances of YHWH, implying that he has chosen this person, comparable to texts like 42:1-4; 49:1-6, and also statements about what the speaker has experienced in his relationship with God, comparable to the report of the Servant about his labouring in vain, his confidence in YHWH and his justification (49:1-6; 50:4-9; 53). The connection between the commission of the prophet in Isa. 61 and that of the Servant, relies on the co-ordinating themes of being moved by God's spirit, good tidings and consolation, and ultimately the ascent of a righteous progeny²⁰⁰.

Beuken's conviction of the unity and originality of Third Isaiah finds its specific expression in the developing of "The Main-Theme of Third Isaiah", that of "the servants of YHWH", which he finds as a "theme" during the whole of chapters 56-66, even where the expression itself does not appear²⁰¹.

The theme of "the servants of YHWH" introduced in the last chapters of Second Isaiah (53:10; 54:17) is programmatically announced in the prologue of Third Isaiah (56:1-8). YHWH announces "righteousness" as the goal of his acting and unfolds his intention to his servants (vv.1f., 6f.). After the prologue the notion is missing in the two principal parts, 56:9-59:21 and 60:1-63:6, but here, according to Beuken, we are confronted with a phenomenon of aposiopesis. "In these chapters 'the servants' are slowly but surely constituted without mention of their name"²⁰².

²⁰⁰ *idem*, p. 439.

²⁰¹ The Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah: 'The Servants of YHWH', *JSOT* 47, (1990), 67-87.

²⁰² *idem*, pp. 67-87.

Some terms in these parts that are closely connected with “the servants”, namely “seed” and “righteousness”, prepare for the mention of “the servants” in Isa. 63:17.

The first principal part (Isa. 56:9-59:21) develops the theme of the contrast between the righteous and the godless.

In the second principal part (Isa. 60:1-63:6) the godless play a magical role, but the righteous are shown their place in God’s plans. Gradually, according to Beuken, the servants emerge from nowhere as a party through the development of the concepts “righteousness” and “offspring, seed”, which changes into “people” at the end (Isa. 62:10-12). In the above-mentioned chapters Beuken sees one drama, in which the servants rise up from oppression and sin in order to become the righteous offspring of the Servant. At the end, after the anticipated entry into the sanctuary of Zion (62:10-12), they are constituted as such²⁰³.

The servants present themselves for the first time as such in the penitential prayer in Isa. 63:7-64:11. In this prayer there is no question of that salvation to come, but of the present misery of oppression, sin and obscuring of God. The term “servants”, after a lengthy preparation by means of an aposiopesis, comes up again and stands parallel to the word “heritage” (נַחֲלָה), with which it was connected when it first appeared (Isa. 54:17). In this way, according to Beuken, Third Isaiah refers explicitly to the text in which the theme first entered²⁰⁴.

Isa. 65 is central in Third Isaiah as far as the theme of the servants is concerned. The chapter contains the actual decisions about the servants’ destiny, their vindication by YHWH and the judgement over the apostates (65:13-15)²⁰⁵.

Beuken concludes that the prophecy of Third Isaiah as a whole foresees a transforming of Israel by God. “The rebellious people” (65:2) disappears from the stage, because those who left YHWH will exist no more in the

²⁰³ *idem*, pp. 69-75.

²⁰⁴ *idem*, pp. 75-76.

²⁰⁵ The Main Theme, *JSOT* 47, 1990, 76-81.

new world order. Their names remain as a swearword (65:15), they pass into oblivion, together with “the former troubles” (65:16), of which they are a part. The remainder of that people are the servants of YHWH, the juice which is saved out of the bunch of grapes (65:8). They become the people of God (65:10, 18, 19)²⁰⁶.

According to Beuken, Third Isaiah has developed the most original message of his predecessor about the Servant of YHWH in a no less original way by pointing out the oppressed of Zion as the offspring of that figure, the servants of YHWH. “The prophecy of Second Isaiah had led to an enigma: in whom will the promise, made to the Servant, be realized? Third Isaiah announces that this realization takes place now, insofar as there are people in Israel who, in the midst of troubles, ask for God and invoke him (65:1), because it is sure that he answers and hears their prayers even before they call to him (65:24). Here it appears that the prayer of 63:7-64:11 must necessarily precede chapter 65. In those who say that prayer, the servants of YHWH have risen (63:17)²⁰⁷.

Beuken attempts to answer the question of Third Isaiah’s return to the theme of “the Servants of YHWH” in Isa. 66, as the theme ends with chapter 65. According to Beuken, the vindication of the servants is over, but 66:1-14 sheds a closer light on some aspects of it.

Applying the intertextual method Beuken had already dealt with Isa. 66:1-6 in his earlier article *Does Trito-Isaiah reject the Temple? An Intertextual Inquiry into Isa. 66:1-6*²⁰⁸. According to him, the editors of Third Isaiah have added 66:1-6 to chapter 65, because it seemed that there was something lacking in the latter: a direct address of the faithful and also the announcement that the judgement was really about to happen. “The passage sounds like an answer to the complaint of the oppressed, for whom Isa. 65 was a very distant vision, while precisely they were being challenged that YHWH should manifest his glory now (verse 5). Moreover

²⁰⁶ *idem*, p. 81.

²⁰⁷ *idem*, p. 81.

²⁰⁸ In S. Draisma (ed.) *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings, Essays in honour of Bas van Iersel*, Kampen 1989, pp. 53-66.

they cherished the hope that the temple would not justify the position of power of the oppressors, but on the contrary, would turn away all evil (verses 3, 6)”²⁰⁹.

Beuken regards Third Isaiah’s preaching as an elaboration of Second Isaiah’s message of comfort which is accomplished in 66:7-14 with the representation of Jerusalem as a mother who suckles her children. Those addressed are no longer lookers on at Zion’s successful delivery; they themselves become her children by participating in her joy (66:10-11). This is also the only place where Zion itself grants consolation. Everywhere else the comfort comes from God (40:1; 49:13; 51:12; 57:18; 61:2; 66:13) and often Zion is the recipient (51:3, 19; 52:9; 54:11). Thus, according to Beuken, the theology of Zion in the second half of the book of Isaiah reaches its climax here. “YHWH, who lets Jerusalem produce new offspring in a miraculous way, also enables it to suckle the offspring. The city is the habitat of consolation for the progeny promised to the Servant”²¹⁰.

In his article *Isaiah Chapters LXV–LXVI: Third Isaiah and the Closure of the Book of Isaiah*²¹¹ Beuken maintains that the book of Isaiah is the result of a complicated process in which extensive “Vorlagen” (drafts, preliminary forms) of the three major parts were combined by a comprehensive editing which fitted all the pieces of material to one another. This process is characterized by two elements: 1) Second Isaiah forms the core around which the book of Isaiah has come into being. 2) Third Isaiah has to an important extent originated from the editorial process in which sections of First Isaiah and Second Isaiah were connected.

The book of Isaiah concludes with three epilogues: 1) 66:7-14 is the epilogue to Third Isaiah (56:1-66:6), the central topic of which is “the servants of YHWH”, who are mentioned for the last time in 66:14²¹². 2) 66:15-20a [20b-21] is the epilogue to a combined Second Isaiah and

²⁰⁹ *idem*, p. 64.

²¹⁰ The Main Theme, *JSOT* 47 (1990), p. 83.

²¹¹ *Congress Volume*, Leuven 1989, J.A. Emerton (ed.), *VTSupl* 43, pp. 204-221.

²¹² *idem*, pp. 205-207.

Third Isaiah its theme being YHWH's theophany to bring salvation to Jerusalem and to punish sinners²¹³. 3) 66:22-23(24) is the closure of the whole book of Isaiah. Its first function is to integrate the central themes of the two concluding passages, that of the servants of YHWH (66:7-14) and that of the destiny of Israel and the nations at the theophany of YHWH (66:15-20). The second function of verses 22-23 emerges from their vocabulary which is similar to the vocabulary of Isaiah 1. Several authors have drawn attention to the fact that Isaiah 65-66 have many terms in common with Isaiah 1²¹⁴. According to Beuken, the lexical correspondence between chapters 65-66 and chapter 1 is due, to a great extent, to the fact that both text complexes contain the same prophetic literary genres, namely accusation, admonition, announcement of judgement and salvation oracle. "Within these genres the same themes occur, such as Israel's sinning (65:2, 7, 11-12; 66:4; 1:4, 11, 13, 16, 19), cultic abuses (65:3-4; 66:3, 17; 1:11-15, 29), God's listening to his people (65:24; 1:15) and Israel's listening to him (66:5; 1:10), the separation of the just and the wicked (65:11-15; 66:5-6, 23-24; 1:24-28), and a new name (65:15; 1:26)²¹⁵. Despite the thematic similarities between Isaiah 65-66 and Isaiah 1 Beuken focuses only on the "density of common words" between Isaiah 1 and Isaiah 65:17-24, 66:15-21, and 66:22-24. He regards the density of common words in Isaiah 65:17-24 and 66:15-21 as "remarkably less intense" whereas the density of common terms in Isaiah 66:22-24 "is of remarkable quality"²¹⁶. This arbitrary²¹⁷ criterion

²¹³ *idem*, pp. 207-213.

²¹⁴ *idem*, pp. 213-221.

²¹⁵ *idem*, p. 220.

²¹⁶ *idem*, p. 220-221.

²¹⁷ Though the two passages share common words (1:2: *heaven and earth*/66:22: *new heavens and new earth*; 1:4: *offspring who do evil*/66:22: *offspring* - a promise of the everlasting existence of the descendants of nations or Israelites or both; 1:12 and 66:22-23: *before my face*; 1:2,28 and 66:24: *rebelled against me*; 1:13: *new moon and sabbath*/66:23: *from new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath*; 1:31: *the strong...and their work shall burn together, with no one to quench them*/66:24: *fire* (of those who have rebelled against YHWH) *shall not be quenched*) only the accusation against those who 'rebelled against me' and the announcement of their downfall

leads him to the conclusion that the lexical agreement of Isa. 66 with Isa. 1 “reaches the level of a deliberate reference to the opening chapters of the book only at the very end, and in such a way that words from both the beginning and the end of chapter 1 (verses 2, 4, 12-13, 28, 31) are quoted so as to include the whole chapter in the reference”²¹⁸.

Summarizing his general view of Third Isaiah, as expounded above, and his intention of commenting on the text from a synchronic point of view, in his recently published commentary on Third Isaiah²¹⁹, Beuken dates the material after the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. and the beginning of the return of exiles to Jerusalem, and before the end of the fourth century.

Antony Tomasino’s recent study on Isaiah 1:1-2:4 and 63-66 and the Composition of the Isaianic Corpus²²⁰ expands upon those observations concerning the relationship between Isa. 1 and Isa. 66, or 65-66, by demonstrating that Isa. 63:7-66:24 has been deliberately patterned after the opening unit of First Isaiah, 1:2-2:4.

Tomasino underlines at first, the similarities in the themes and vocabulary between Isa. 1:2-2:4 and 63:7-66:24, and, secondly, the verbal and structural parallelism between 1:2-31 and 66:1-24 (Isa. 1:2 parallel to 66:1=Heaven and Earth Merismus; Isa. 1:2-9 parallel to 63:7-64:11= “Sons” metaphor, Judah devastated; Isa. 1:10-20 parallel to 66:1-6= Anti-cultic polemic; Isa. 1:21-26 parallel to 66:7-13= Personification of Zion; Isa. 1:27-31 parallel to 66:14-17= Redemption/Judgement of Zion; Isa. 2:2-4 parallel to 66:18-24= Gathering the Nations to Zion; Isa. 1:31 parallel to 66:24= Wicked consumed by unquenchable fire)²²¹.

Apart from the above-mentioned parallelisms between 1:2-2:4 and 66:1-24, Tomasino stresses the various connections between Third Isaiah and Second Isaiah; for example, the “comfort” theme in Isa. 66, which is a

correspond (66:24; 1:2, 28). The rest of the words are used in different contexts in Isaiah 1 and 66:22-24.

²¹⁸ *idem*, p. 221.

²¹⁹ *Jesaia deel IIIA; deel IIIB (De Prediking van het Oude Testament)*, Nijkerk 1989.

²²⁰ *JSOT* 57, 1993, pp. 81-98.

²²¹ Isaiah 1:1-2:4 and 63-66, *JSOT* 57, 1993, pp. 83-93.

hallmark of Second Isaiah, and the “creation” theme in Isa. 65:17-25 and 66:22, is reminiscent of Isa. 40:25-28, 45:18, and other Second Isaianic passages. To build his argument he also cites some central themes of Second Isaiah that, according to him, do not appear in Isaiah 1. These are: the polemic against idolatry²²², divine sovereignty and foreknowledge, or the “comfort” theme. His conclusion is that: 1) the composer of Isaiah 1 had no knowledge of Second Isaiah. This chapter was not composed after the rest of the book, as an introduction to the book as a whole, nor was it composed by the author of chapters 63-66; 2) the author of Isaiah 63-66 knew Isaiah 1 and Second Isaiah. According to Tomasino, “Isaiah 1 may have been the first chapter in an early First Isaianic collection. When Third Isaiah, or whoever authored these last chapters, brought together the book of Isaiah, he or she wanted to give the collection a sense of unity and closure. This was best achieved by thematically and structurally linking the first and last oracles of the book”²²³.

Tomasino, however, is not completely satisfied with the explanation this hypothesis offers for the structural parallelism between the first and last oracles of the book of Isaiah, because of 1) the insertion of chapter 65 in the section, which interrupts, according to him, the thematic parallelism between 1:2-2:4 and 63:7-66:24, and 2) the structural similarity between chapters 1 and 66 [i.e. the “heaven and earth” merismus at the beginning, and the use of the root כָּבַח (*quench*) at the end]. According to Tomasino, “chapter 65, along with 66:22-24, is the product of a ‘double redaction’ of the last chapters of Third Isaiah. The original composition (i.e. the redaction based on chapter 1) may not have contained chapter 65 at all. Rather, it probably moved from 64:11 to 66:1”²²⁴. Tomasino has obviously overlooked the similarity between Isaiah 1:29-31 and 65:1-7, 11 in terms of the theme of the accusation of idolatry.

²²² Tomasino has overlooked the theme of the polemic against idolatry in Isaiah 1:29-31.

²²³ *idem*, p. 96.

²²⁴ *idem*, p. 96.

The theme of ‘*servant of YHWH*’ in Isa. 40-46 and the interrelationship between its sub-units has been also examined by Knud Jeppesen in his article From ‘you my Servant’ to ‘the Hand of the Lord is with my Servants’. A discussion of Isa. 40-66²²⁵.

Jeppesen deals with Isa. 40-66 as a separate unit from Isa. 1-39 because of the new terms (themes) found in the former. However, he does not regard chapters 40-66 as one unit.

The first two parts (40-48 and 49-55) are tied together redactionally in the exilic prophetic text “Second Isaiah”, but the perspective in the preaching of the former differs from that of the latter. According to Jeppesen, the focus of Isa. 40-48 is on a group of people inside Jacob-Israel and his political rights. In Isa. 49-55 it has been moved to Zion-Jerusalem and the religious matters connected to her and her community, the exiles²²⁶. The third part (Isa. 55-66), “Third Isaiah”, is post-exilic, and here conflicting ideas come to light. For Jeppesen the terms Second and Third Isaiah are used as labels for Isa. 40-55 and 56-66 and nothing else. He argues for a “deutero-Isaianic” redaction of Isa. 1-55* but choosing between an early post-exilic origin for the main redaction of the book of Isaiah, as M. Sweeney has advocated in his work *Isaiah 1-4 and the Post-exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition*²²⁷, and a late exilic one, Jeppesen prefers the latter. According to him, “Third Isaiah is mainly a later development of deutero-Isaianic themes after 520 B.C.”²²⁸. What is really new in Isa. 56-66, according to Jeppesen, compared to Second Isaiah (40-55) is that the latent conflict seen in the last words of chapter 48: ‘*there is no peace for the godless*’, has now exploded. These words are repeated (57:1), and the conflict with the “godless” is hardened. “The opponents of the prophet (or prophets) are not any longer ridiculous worshippers of Babylonian idols. They are fellow citizens, who ‘*burn with lust among the oaks, under every green tree*’ (57:5). And they are powerful

²²⁵ *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*, Aarhus 1990 (no. 1), pp. 113-129.

²²⁶ From ‘you my Servant’, *SJOT*, 1990 (no. 1), pp. 114-117.

²²⁷ *BZAW* 171, Berlin 1988.

²²⁸ From ‘you my Servant’, *SJOT*, 1990 (no. 1), p. 113, footnote 4.

people: *'The righteous man perishes, and no one takes it to heart'* 57:1. There are even *'brothers'* who *'hate them for God's name's sake, and cast them out'* (66:5)"²²⁹.

In the second part of his article Jeppesen deals with the usage of the word עֶבֶד (*servant*) in the three sections of Isa. 40-66.

In Isa. 40-48 the servant can be interpreted collectively as Jacob-Israel and it can be maintained that harmony exists without modifications in the relationship between God and people. The servant is directly related to God as his creation and his chosen one²³⁰.

In Isa. 49-55 the servant is much more of a personality, an individual, than the servant in chapters 40-48. Jeppesen sees Isa. 49:1-7 as a bridge between 40-48 and 49-55. The individual features are more obvious, and even more so in the servant texts of chapters 50 and 52-53. The servant has a mission to the people.

Beginning in 54:17 and throughout Isa. 56-66, the servant is mentioned in the plural, a designation for the group of Israelites who have the right attitude towards God and who, consequently, are to inherit the land²³¹.

Jeppesen has been able to see how the theme of *'servant of YHWH'*, first mentioned in Isa. 41:8 and referring to the people as a whole, was modified to *'the servants of YHWH'* in Isa. 56-66 referring now to the righteous in Israel.

Rejecting as outdated the search for "Isaiah within the book of Isaiah" and the more recent search for the redactor of the book and proposing the recent literary and sociological approach, Edgar Conrad concentrates in his reading of the book of Isaiah on its structure, its rhetorical features, and its suggestions about the audience it addresses²³². For him, "literature such as the book of Isaiah is its own meaning"²³³. He is interested in

²²⁹ *idem*, p. 118.

²³⁰ *idem*, pp. 119-122.

²³¹ *idem*, pp. 122-129.

²³² *Reading Isaiah*, Minneapolis 1991, p. 16.

²³³ *idem*, p. 29.

“relating parts of the text not to a world external to it (its historical background or its history of literary development) but to the literary world of the text itself”²³⁴. Conrad distinguishes his own conception of structure from that of redaction criticism. Redaction criticism is concerned with structure as “historically developed” while Conrad’s structure is concerned with the “aesthetic momentum”²³⁵. His criteria for discerning the structure of the text are: “repetition in vocabulary, motif, theme, narrative sequence, and rhetorical questions, pronominal shifts, and forms of address”²³⁶. He also employs the concepts of “the implied reader and the implied audience as theoretical constructs encoded in the text”²³⁷.

His thesis is that the ancient vision of Isaiah (6-39) was rejected by the original audience. Isaiah 1-5 and 40-66 present a framework in which a renewed community is receptive to the message. According to Conrad, the narratives about Kings Ahaz (Isa. 6-8) and Hezekiah (Isa. 36-39) unify the book. Relying on his earlier form-critical study of the “*fear not*” formula as part of a war oracle, Conrad interjects strong etymological and historical insights into this literary description. The royal narrative in chapters 36-39 and its accompanying war oracles to the people in 41:8-13, 14-16; 43:1-4, 5-6; and 44:1-5 echo and fulfil the royal narrative in chapter 7 and its war oracle in 10:24-27. Hezekiah is the climactic figure of the book, for after his death comes the third (after the Syro-Ephraimite coalition and Assyria) and greatest world power, Babylon. Its destruction ushers in a new age, which is described in chapter 40 forward. The new age has no king, for the people as a group become king. The community opens its boundaries to let the nations join their worship²³⁸.

In chapter 3 Conrad discusses the development of the motif of the Lord’s plan -his military strategy- for all the earth. This motif also, according to Conrad, represents an essential element in the structure of the book²³⁹.

²³⁴ *idem*, pp. 29-30.

²³⁵ *idem*, p. 29.

²³⁶ *idem*, p. 30.

²³⁷ *idem*, p. 31.

²³⁸ *idem*, pp. 34-51.

²³⁹ *idem*, pp. 52-82.

The Lord will extend his military strategy beyond Assyria and Babylon to all the nations of the earth, the contribution especially of chapters 24-27. Babylon becomes a symbol of punishment and the other nations are “exemplars” of a universal divine judgement. Conrad underscores the symbolism: “to attempt to read deliverance from Babylonian captivity as having a historical referent is to fail to appreciate the symbolism of the book. The language of the text of Isaiah creates a vision and a hope for the future; it does not supply source information reflecting the past”²⁴⁰.

The implied audience of the book is a community divided into “we” and “they”. For one group the Lord is absent and unconcerned whereas for the other he is at work and fulfilling a plan. The “we” group is singled out as survivors of God’s judgement both at the beginning and the end of the book (1:9-10 and 66:19). Furthermore, the first person plural voice that speaks toward the end of the book (59:9-15 and 63:7-64:12) is linked with both the past, the time of Isaiah (chapters 6-8), and Isaiah’s vision of the future, the judgement and salvation of the Lord (chapters 24-27), experienced by the implied audience in the present. The midsection of the book, then, concerning both the past and future, has its setting in the present experience of the implied community. The movement of the book is present-past/future-present²⁴¹.

Isaiah’s vision was written down for the community of survivors of God’s judgement (6:9-10; 8:16-20; 30:8-9) after it failed to win acceptance from the original hearers. To them the hitherto sealed vision of Isaiah (29:9-12) is announced in chapter 40, where Conrad interprets a קרא in 40:6 as ‘*Read [the vision]!*’ (NRSV translates *cry out*) Isaiah himself is the chief survivor and is hence a model for the “we” group. The woes delivered against the opponents in the vision of Isaiah (chapters 28-33) and anticipated in the description of the implied community in chapter 5 suggest, according to Conrad, that the opposition is an official one. The part of the community that disregards the teaching and word of “*the Lord*

²⁴⁰ *idem*, p. 81.

²⁴¹ *idem*, pp. 83-116.

our God” is characterized as the leaders who are so confused as to mistake evil for good²⁴².

The book of Isaiah is structured in such a way that Isaiah’s ancient vision in 6-39, an alien text, sealed (8:16-20) and unreadable (29:11) is presented in a framework (1-5 and 40-66) in which it is read aloud (40:6) to a receptive audience²⁴³.

In a previous article²⁴⁴ Edgar Conrad has sought to understand the Abraham connection in the book of Isaiah. He starts with the assumption that as a whole the text creates a world, a literary world. His approach is to relate the four references to Abraham in the book of Isaiah (29:22-24; 41:8-13; 51:1-2; and 63:15-19) to that literary world. The progression of the references to Abraham, according to Conrad, provides a clue to the depiction of Abraham in the structured world of the book and forms a pattern important for understanding Isaiah as a whole. The significance of Abraham seems in some sense to diminish from the first to the last reference. The name of Abraham in Isa. 29 is used to identify God himself (*the Lord, who redeemed Abraham*). The name of Abraham in Isa. 41 is used to identify Israel (*the offspring of Abraham*). In Isa. 51 the name of Abraham is evoked not for the purpose of identification of God or Israel (the primary act of naming) but for the purpose of application (the secondary act of using or employing). The community is told to consider the example of Abraham and to apply knowledge of what happened to Abraham to the understanding of Israel’s destiny. In the final passage (63:15-19), as in 51:1-2, Abraham is diminished in status. Here he is grouped with another ancestor of the past, Israel, as he was associated with Sarah in 51:1-2. Furthermore, the community cannot be identified by alluding to Abraham because Abraham does not know Israel and does not acknowledge it. Abraham metaphorically disowns Israel. The community thus refers directly to God as “*father*”, seeming to disregard the reference in 51 to

²⁴² *idem*, pp. 117-153.

²⁴³ *idem*, p. 155.

²⁴⁴ Isaiah and the Abraham Connection, *Asia Journal of Theology* 2, 1, 1988, pp. 382-393.

Abraham as Israel's father. In fact the community now associates itself more closely with "*those over whom thou hast never ruled*" than with Abraham²⁴⁵.

According to Conrad, the diminishing importance of Abraham is associated with changes not only in content and voice (person) but also in mood and tone from the first to the last passage - changes which signify an altered relationship between God and Israel. In 29, Israel, the house of Jacob, is presented negatively as erring; in 41, the people are weak, also a negative assessment. In 51, the people are presented positively as active in their reaching out for God; they "*pursue deliverance*" rather than simply accept it. They "*seek the Lord*" rather than wait to be sought. Finally in 63, the people are presented as erring because God has made them do so ("*why dost thou make us err from thy ways?*"), and the people have absorbed the compassion of God ("*the yearning of thy heart and thy compassion are within me*"). "The relationship between God and Israel has moved from the unilateral to the reciprocal: 29 is an annunciation in a detached voice; 41 is consolation, in a warm but paternalistic tone; 51 is exhortation, reflecting respect for an active Israel, and 63 is Israel's energetic and assertive response"²⁴⁶.

Conrad has been able to trace the development and variation of some motifs and some literary forms which are repeated in the whole book of Isaiah and which he understands in terms of their function within the larger text.

Another contribution to the topic of the book of Isaiah as a whole to be mentioned here is that of Bernhard Anderson²⁴⁷. He faces the book of Isaiah as a whole, but he argues "instead of reading the Isaiah tradition forward from the standpoint of the seminal preaching of Isaiah of

²⁴⁵ *idem*, p. 390.

²⁴⁶ *idem*, p. 391.

²⁴⁷ The Apocalyptic Rendering of the Isaiah Tradition, In: J. Neusner et. al. (eds.), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism*, 1988, 17-38.

Jerusalem...” he proposes “to consider it from the viewpoint of its final apocalyptic relecture or rendering”²⁴⁸.

Following P. Hanson, Anderson believes that during the period of the Second Temple, in the late sixth century and the fifth century B.C.E., the Isaiah tradition was expanded with proto-apocalyptic materials found in Isaiah 55-66 and, perhaps a little later, with apocalyptic supplements that abound in Isaiah 1-35, such as the apocalypse of Isaiah 24-27²⁴⁹.

His method is to look for major theological ideas concerning the apocalyptic rendering within the last stages of the redaction of the book. According to Anderson, the recognition of the centrality of Zion or the “*City of God*” is a motif that runs through all levels of tradition, (24:14-20, 21-23; 25:6-8; 59:20; 60:14b-16, 62:11-12) and one that is heavily stressed in the final apocalyptic rendering²⁵⁰.

Consideration of the theme of YHWH’S cosmic kingship in Zion leads, according to Anderson, to another important issue in the apocalyptic rendering of the Isaiah tradition: the relation between the cosmic kingdom of God and the divine sovereignty in mundane affairs. A key metaphor for expressing the relation between the cosmic and worldly realms is the image of the King presiding in the heavenly council (Isa. 14:24-27; 28:29; 30:8-10; 33:14; 63:9-10)²⁵¹.

YHWH’s plan, according to the apocalyptic rendering of the Isaiah tradition, is to act so that all nations will see the “righteousness” (vindication) or “salvation” of Zion (Isa. 1:27-28; 62:1-4). In the various levels of the Isaianic tradition, YHWH is portrayed as the mythical Divine Warrior. In Isaiah’s message during the eighth century, YHWH’s battle is against Zion (1:24-26). In a series of powerful poems, Isaiah announced that YHWH’s anger against Israel has not abated “*and his hand is outstretched*” to strike (5:25; 9:11, 17, 21; 10:4). In a later level of tradition the divine hand is “*stretched out over all the nations*” and cannot be turned

²⁴⁸ *idem*, p. 18.

²⁴⁹ *idem*, p. 17.

²⁵⁰ *idem*, pp. 18-21.

²⁵¹ *idem*, pp. 21-26.

back (14:26-27). In apocalyptic perspective, the triumph of the Divine warrior is a consolation, first of all, for the afflicted and oppressed people of Israel (66:13; 57:15) and a divine triumph over evil, and hence the cessation of violence, will mark the beginning of a completely new age, a New Zion, indeed a New Creation (Isa. 65:17-19)²⁵².

The motif of waiting for God, and specifically for the demonstration of the justice of God's ways, is found in all levels of Isaianic tradition: early (Isa. 8:17; 13:6; 30:18; 33:2), middle (Second Isaiah, 40:31; 49:23; 51:5), and late (Third Isaiah, 56:9; 60:9) or apocalyptic (25:9; 26:8, 20b-21)²⁵³.

In the above-mentioned discussion of the origins of apocalypticism it has already been stated that the theme of the intervention of YHWH is a main feature of the eschatological teaching in both apocalypses and Isaiah 56-66 but it hardly characterizes the variety of the contents of the apocalypses. Eschatology may have been an element in the production of apocalypses, but the visionary experience and access to divine secrets (through revelation by various media) as well as the study of scripture were the central elements of the apocalypses. In so far as apocalyptic literature shares many of the eschatological beliefs of post-exilic Judaism it is only to be expected that they should appear in this literature too. Therefore, themes such as the waiting of God and the exaltation/restoration of Zion²⁵⁴ are not elements of an "apocalyptic relecture or rendering", according to Anderson, but of an eschatological rendering.

The literary criticism is an attempt to overcome the difficulties the redactional criticism has raised with its analysis of stages and layers in the history of the book of Isaiah as a whole.

²⁵² *idem*, pp. 26-32.

²⁵³ *idem*, pp. 32-35.

²⁵⁴ Cf. some of the passages of the Jewish apocalypses indicating restoration (Dan. 12:1-4; 1 Enoch (Animal Apocalypse) 90:28-36; 4 Ezra 10:27; Syriac Baruch 51:5, 85:4; Apocalypse of Abraham 31:1-4) (E.P. Sanders, *The Genre of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypses*, in D. Hellholm (ed.), *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, 1983, pp. 456-457).

Having surveyed the various attempts, based on redactional, thematic, structural, and intertextual coherence, this study now will turn to describe the method which will be applied in it. The redactional processes that attribute Isaiah 56-66 or the book of Isaiah to redactional strata have reached a dead-end. They lay exclusive emphasis on the fragmentation, incoherence and diversity of the material, and on the scrutiny of author and date of the various strata. The redactional processes, however, that lead from diversity to unity are necessary for a complete picture of the nature and significance of the material in Isaiah 56-66 and for the development of the book of Isaiah as a whole. The focus on the development of the book as a whole and on the unity in Isaiah has been the starting-point of the approaches based on thematic and intertextual affinities between the parts of the book. However, the criteria on the basis of which a part of the book alludes to another part have not been intensively and adequately explored.

3) Method applied in this study

The long occupation with the author of texts in biblical studies, the almost obsessional concern to identify who wrote what and to attribute every fragment of a text to a specific author or to assign each layer of a text to the genuine, the secondary or to the gloss - these are concerns that have been in the process of being abandoned in recent decades. An intertextual approach to biblical texts should assist that abandonment further. The author must be abandoned simply because the biblical texts are hardly 'authored' in the modern sense of an author as the actual writer of a text. Isaiah studies would certainly benefit greatly from the abandonment of the search for either "the historical Isaiah" or "the author of the book of Isaiah" or "the redactional strata". An intertextual approach to the book of Isaiah which sees it as a network of "repetition and transformation of other textual structures"²⁵⁵ would focus our attention on the text rather than on data to which we have no access. Intertextuality means that no text can ever be seen as existing as a closed system or as a hermetic or self-sufficient text. It always exists in terms of and over against other texts. So it always exists in reference to other texts. "A text may respond to and be deeply dependent upon received traditions"²⁵⁶ ; it can be "complexly compacted of teachings and their subversion, of rules and their extension, of topoi and their revision"²⁵⁷ . Intertextuality describes a number of phenomena that are very old, very common and remarkably well known. "Ancient Near Eastern myths were theologically adapted and historicized; nomadic recollections were revised in order to promote the prestige and claims of tribal ancestors; and narrative topoi were reworked with new moral or theological considerations in mind"²⁵⁸ . The practitioners of the

²⁵⁵ J. Frow, Intertextuality and Ontology, In: M. Worton and J. Still (eds.), *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, Manchester 1990, p. 45.

²⁵⁶ M. Fishbane, Inner-Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel, In: *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics*, 1989, p. 3.

²⁵⁷ *idem*, p. 18.

²⁵⁸ *idem*, p. 5.

tradition-history approaches might talk about “echo”, “influence”, “borrowing”, “quotation”, “actualization”, etc. In biblical studies much work has already been done on intertextual matters.

The publication of M. Fishbane’s *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford 1985) offers precise means of identifying the literary forms of intertextuality in the texts of the Old Testament, and specifically within prophecy.

He has argued that the intense preoccupation with earlier prophecy which marks the post-exilic content of the book of Isaiah (the so-called Second and Third Isaiah) is a mode of legal (Isa. 56:1-7; 60:7; 61:6; 66:18-21), aggadic (Isa. 56:1-7; 58:1-12; Isa. 43:18-19; 65:16-17), or mantological (Isa. 58:14) interpretations which are introduced as a revealed word of YHWH²⁵⁹.

According to Fishbane, inner-biblical legal exegesis is distinctively concerned with making pre-existing laws applicable or viable in new contexts. Aggadic exegesis is primarily concerned with utilizing the full range of the inherited *traditum* -that is, “broad and detailed use of moral dicta, official or popular *theologoumena*, themes, motifs, and historical facts” for the sake of new theological insights, attitudes, and speculations²⁶⁰. Mantological exegesis is a “decoding” operation, related to mantic wisdom or divination, which opens the text to comprehension and enlightens what is dark and obscure. Fishbane distinguishes two basic types of material: a) dreams, visions, and omens (visual phenomena); and b) oracles (auditory phenomena)²⁶¹. In the mantological exegesis of oracles older prophetic language is reused, reapplied, recontextualized, and believed (perhaps especially in times of apparent divine silence) to be near fulfilment, or it is about to be reversed²⁶². The original oracle

²⁵⁹ *Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 128, 304-307, 352, 478.

²⁶⁰ *idem*, p. 282.

²⁶¹ *idem*, pp. 443, 506.

²⁶² *idem*, pp. 458-499.

“retains its authoritative status as a divine word but requires redirection, respecification, revivification” and re-application “to a new situation”²⁶³. This study will try to apply Fishbane’s ideas for the mantological exegesis of oracles to Isaiah 56-66. In my view Isaiah 56-66 is an anthology (collection) of expectations about the future of a scribe (redactor) who, by means of the use of mantological exegesis (and less of aggadic or legal exegesis), wanted to give authority and force to the pronouncements and exhortations of the First and Second Isaiah (and other texts of the Old Testament) for later generations who would read them, and he transformed them into the eschatological beliefs found in some of the apocalypses. This scribe added this collection (Isa. 56-66) in the Isaianic corpus assigning them to Isaiah’s prestigious personality. It must be stressed that this type of pseudepigraphy is different from the form of pseudepigraphy found in the apocalypses.

Isa. 56-66 is a literary event for later generations who inherited the once spoken oracles. This study will try to show a number of topics and themes that are characteristic for Isa. 56-66 and at the same time appear in both - or at least in one- of the other parts of the book or other books of the Old Testament (like the wisdom literature).

Certain interrelations between the different parts of the book have been observed by several scholars²⁶⁴. However, these studies focus only on the

²⁶³ *idem*, Revelation and Tradition: Aspects of Inner-Biblical Exegesis, *JBL* 99 (1980), 355.

²⁶⁴ H. Odeberg, *Trito-Isaiah (Isaiah lxvi-lxvi): A Literary and Linguistic Analysis*, 1931; L.J. Liebreich, The Compilation of the Book of Isaiah, *JQR* 46 (1955-56), 259-277, *JQR* 47 (1956-57), 113-138; J.H. Eaton, The Origin of the Book of Isaiah, *VT* 9 (1959), 154; W. Zimmerli, Zur Sprache Tritojesajas, in *Gottes Offenbarung*, 1963, 217-233; Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 1975; P. R. Ackroyd, Isaiah I-XII: Presentation of a Prophet, in: J.A. Emerton (ed.), Congress Volume Gottingen 1977, *VTSup.* 29 (1978), 22; R.E. Clements, The Unity of the Book of Isaiah, *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 117-129; Beyond Tradition History: Deutero-Isaianic Development of First Isaiah’s Themes, *JSOT* 31 (1985), 95-113; D.G. Meade, Pseudonymity and Canon: An Investigation into the Relationship of Authorship and Authority in Jewish and Earliest Christian Tradition, *WUNT* 39 (1986), 27-43; W.A.M. Beuken, Isa. 56:9-57:13-An Example of the Isaianic Legacy of Third Isaiah, in: J.W. van Henten et. al. (eds.), *Tradition and Reinterpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, Leiden 1986, pp. 48-64; Servant and Herald of

examination of words that are parallel in the three parts of the book of Isaiah and the result is no more than a linguistic analysis and a thesaurus of terms.

R.E. Clements has pointed out a number of passages within chapters 1-39 which show evidence of the influence of other passages in the book, particularly chapters 40-55. Among these he includes not only chapter 35, which is “a summarized ‘digest’ of the main content of the prophecies of chapters 40-55”²⁶⁵ with its message of hope, the theme of “the return of YHWH’s people to Zion”, but also, for similar reasons, Isa. 11:12-16; 19:23; 27:12-13²⁶⁶. He argues similarly for an integral, rather than a merely superficial, unity between Isaiah 40-55 and 56-66. Chapters 56-66 were intended, he believes, “not as a fresh and entirely self-contained declaration from YHWH to the post-exilic community, but rather as a carrying-forward of the divine word as it had been declared on the eve of the overthrow of Babylon by the unnamed prophet of chapters 40-55”²⁶⁷. To say that Isaiah 56-66 is the product of the learned study of the scripture by a scribe who reuses the language of First and Second Isaiah and other texts of the Old Testament (including the language of wisdom) is not to undervalue the distinctive message and language of these chapters. The distinctive language of this scribe is obvious from the following words and expressions and themes:

- 1) The expression עָנַג (Hithpael) + עַל ‘to make sport of someone’ occurs only in Isa. 57:4 in the book of Isaiah.
- 2) The reference to the practice of ‘slaughtering children in the wadis’ (57:5) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.

Good Tidings. Isaiah 61 as an interpretation of Isaiah 40-55, in: J. Vermeulen (ed.), *The Book of Isaiah-Le livre d’Isaie*, BETL 81, Leuven 1989, 48-64, et al.

²⁶⁵ Steck in his work *Bereitete Heimkehr: Jesaja 35 als redaktionelle Brücke zwischen dem Ersten und dem Zweiten Jesaja*, Stuttgart 1985 has shown that Isa. 35 cannot be understood by reference to Isa. 40-55 alone. It has also links with Isaiah 56-66 (cf. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 1994, pp. 211-216, 220-221).

²⁶⁶ The Unity, *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 121; cf. idem, *Beyond Tradition History*, JSOT 31 (1985), 98.

²⁶⁷ Clements, *The Unity of the Book of Isaiah*, *Interpretation* 36, (1982), 128.

- 3) The word מֹלֵךְ 'Molech' (57:9) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 4) The word קְבוּץ 'gathered ones or collection' (57:13a) is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.
- 5) The word מַכְשׁוֹל 'obstruction' occurs only in 57:14 and 8:14 in the book of Isaiah.
- 6) The word בִּצְעַת 'unjust gain' occurs only in 56:11; 57:17 and 33:15 in the book of Isaiah.
- 7) The expression עֲשֵׂה צְדָקָה 'do righteousness' occurs only in Isa. 56:1 and 58:2 in the Old Testament.
- 8) The root צִוֵּם 'to fast, fasting' occurs only in 58:3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5, 6 in the book of Isaiah.
- 9) The verb עָנָה 'to oppress, to humble' linked to the noun נֶפֶשׁ as object occurs in only in 58:3, 5 in the book of Isaiah.
- 10) The word מִצָּח 'contention' occurs only in Isa. 58:4 and in Prov. 13:10; 17:19 in the Old Testament.
- 11) The word עֹצֵב 'worker' (58:3) is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.
- 12) The expression נָכָה בְּאֶגְרֵף 'to strike with a fist' (58:4) is found elsewhere in the Old Testament in Exod. 21:18.
- 13) The expression כָּפַף כְּאֶגְמֹן רֹאשׁ 'to bend down the head like a rush' (58:5) is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 14) The expression 'to spread out (to lie upon) sackcloth and ashes' יִצְעַל שֶׁקֶם וְאֶפֶר (58:5) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 15) The adjective חָפְשִׁי (58:6) 'free' occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 16) The word רָשָׁע 'wickedness' used in parallel with the word מוֹטָה 'yoke' is found only 58:6, 9 in the book of Isaiah.
- 17) The pleas for 'sharing of bread with the hungry', clothing of 'the naked', and housing of 'the homeless poor' people (58:7) occur nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.

- 18) The expression שלח אצבע *'pointing of the finger'* (58:9b) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 19) The pattern of giving of a new name (קרא ל) is found only in 58:12b; 60:14b; 61:3c; 62:2b, 4b, 12; 1:26 in the book of Isaiah.
- 20) The expression *'I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth'* הרכבתיך על-במותי ארץ (58:14) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 21) The expression *'your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God'* עונתיכם היו מבדלים בינכם לבין (59:2) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 22) The verb גאל *'to defile'* (59:3) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 23) The expressions *'they hatch adders' eggs'*, *'they weave the spider-threads'*, and *'the pressed (egg) hatches out as a viper'* (59:5) occur nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 24) The passive participle of the verb זור *'to press down and out'* is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament (59:5).
- 25) The expression *'they have made their paths crooked (twisted) for themselves'* (59:8) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 26) The simile *'we all growl like the bears'* נהמה כדבים כלנו (59:11) is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 27) The expressions *'truth stumbles in the public square'* כשלה ברחוב אמת, *'honesty cannot enter'* נכחה לא-תוכל לבוא (59:14) and *'truth is lacking'* נעדרת (59:15a) occur nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 28) The verb נהר *'to shine'* and the expressions *'your heart shall be in awe and be expanded (with joy)'* פחד ורחב לבבך, and *'the abundance of the sea shall turn toward you'* (60:5) are found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 29) The expression *'a multitude of camels shall cover you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah'* (60:6) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.

- 30) The expression *'the rams...shall minister to you'* אֵילֵי...יִשְׂרָתוֹנֶךָ (60:7) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 31) The expressions *'foreigners shall be your ploughmen and vinedressers'* (61:5) and *'you shall be called the priests of YHWH'* (61:6) occur nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 32) The expression *'as a bridegroom plays the priest with a turban'* (61:10) is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.
- 33) The expression *'as a bride decks herself with her jewels'* (61:10) is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 34) The word נְגִהָה (ה) *'brightness'* as a metaphor for the promised salvation by YHWH (59:9; 60:3) is found nowhere else in the Old Testament.
- 35) The phrase יוֹם נִקָּם *'day of vengeance'* occurs only in Prov. 6:34, Isa. 34:8; 61:2, 63:4 in the Old Testament.
- 36) The expression מַלְאֲךְ פָּנָיו *'the angel of His presence'* (63:9b) is unique in the book of Isaiah.
- 37) The expression *'you are our father'* (63:16; 64:8) is unprecedented in the book of Isaiah.
- 38) The practice of *'burning incense on the bricks (roof-tiles) עַל-הַלְבָּנִים* (65:3bβ), used of idolatrous worship, is unique in the Old Testament.
- 39) The word פָּגוּל *'foul thing, refuse'* (65:4), only for unclean sacrificial flesh, is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 40) The word גַּד *'Gad (god of Fortune)'* (65:11) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 41) The word מְנִי *'Meni (god of Fate)'* (65:11) is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.
- 42) The root שָׂקַץ *'abominations'* (66:3, 17) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.
- 43) The word חֲזִיר *'swine'* (65:4; 66:3; 66:17) is rare in the Old Testament. It occurs also in Prov. 11:22, Psalm 80:14, Lev. 11:7, Deut. 14:8.

44) The word עכבר ‘mouse’ (66:17) occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.

45) The expression מנדיכם ‘those who thrust you away’ (Isa. 66:5) occurs only in Amos 6:3 elsewhere in the Old Testament.

In addition to the reinterpretation of older oracles, inner-textual exegesis²⁶⁸, typologies (aggadic technique, according to Fishbane²⁶⁹), pseudepigraphy²⁷⁰, ex eventu prophecy²⁷¹, anthologies²⁷², play on words are the criteria this study will search for, in order to prove that Isaiah 56-66 is a piece of mantological exegesis.

As far as concerns the technique of anthologizing Fishbane implies that certain kinds of anthologizing are characteristic of mantological exegesis²⁷³. He suggests a comparison between Amos 7-8, Zechariah 1-6, Zechariah 9-12, and Daniel 7-12 “where a series of conventionally formulated or reformulated vision-reports with exegesis are anthologically grouped in one document”²⁷⁴. K. Larkin²⁷⁵ has added 4 Ezra (2 Esdras 3-14) as a fifth mantological anthology to the above-mentioned by Fishbane. Fishbane does not, however, elaborate upon what thematic or stylistic associative principles might be used in gathering mantological anthologies. K. Larkin²⁷⁶ has offered a brief comparison

²⁶⁸ Inner-textual exegesis is “a given oracular *traditum* which has been supplemented in one way or another” in the same text (Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 460, 458 n. 1).

²⁶⁹ *Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 350-379.

²⁷⁰ *idem*, pp. 530-533. To avoid the unfortunate terminological overlap between “Pseudepigrapha”, the name of a more or less fixed body of writings and “pseudepigraphy”, the literary practice of attributing one’s writings to someone else, usually an ancient seer, worthy or other dignitary I have to make clear that using the term “pseudepigraphy” I mean the literary technique.

²⁷¹ *idem*, pp. 468-476.

²⁷² That is, “redactional integrations” of “like pieces” grouped in one document and “intended to be read together” “with cross-references to contiguous pieces” (*idem*, pp. 520-521; cf. 514-518).

²⁷³ *idem*, 495, 515, 520-521.

²⁷⁴ *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 1985, 520.

²⁷⁵ *The Eschatology of Second Zechariah. A Study of the Formation of a Mantological Wisdom Anthology*, Kampen 1994, 228-229.

²⁷⁶ *Idem*, 221-247.

between Amos 7-8, Zechariah 1-6, 9-13, and Daniel 7-12 which indicates that there is important evidence of continuity and one can speak of each being an example of an identifiable type of mantological anthology. According to her, the points at which these anthologies can be compared are: a) the presence of material which can be called mantic, either because it interprets visionary material which is not directly comprehensible, or because it interprets a non-visionary revelation (whether a fresh, oracular revelation, or a piece of older scripture which has become problematic in the light of events) in a comparable manner; b) their structure, provided that one does not press details. In each mantological anthology there is:

- 1) A central “adversarial” passage, discussing questions of the nature and acquisition of wisdom (Job 28) or true authority (Amos 7:10-17; Zech. 3:1-7, 8-10; Zech. 11:4-14, 15-16; Daniel 9). Because these centrepieces are a strong feature which can also be identified in the book of Job (chapter 28), K. Larkin suggests that Job 28 may have influenced Zechariah 9-13.
- 2) This central section is surrounded by material which has some formal unity although what follows the central section may differ somewhat in form or content from what precedes it.
- 3) A framing prologue and epilogue which in some way correspond to each other.
- 4) (A less certain or consistent feature) punctuation by summary-and transition passages or authorial closures which reflect the outlook of the author/redactor, and will be consistent in function in the work in question, although the form and the content may vary from one collection to another.

These structural and thematic correspondences are not found in Isaiah 56-66. There is not any adversarial central section describing a confrontation between any prophet and any priest, neither visions-dreams to be interpreted or explained (like Amos 7-8; Zechariah 1-6; Daniel 7-12 but not Zechariah 9-13). However, mantological exegesis of older

prophecy (like Zechariah 9-13) and a different structural pattern which also indicates strong wisdom concerns (see below) are recognizable in these chapters.

Fishbane speaks of “the presumed intent” in the mantological anthologies. He says: “For the author of the Zecharian cycle, the overall goal was to elicit a programme of restoration; for the author of the Daniel apocalypse, on the other hand, the communication of religious confidence and hope through understanding was of major concern”²⁷⁷. This implies that the “intent” of the mantological anthologies can vary.

The structural plan which has dominated the study of the structure of Isa. 56-66 is the concentric structure that has been proposed by Westermann²⁷⁸. Westermann, first, identifies the nucleus of Isa. 56-66 which comprises chapters 60-62 and which are ascribed to Third Isaiah. Then he makes the assumption that if a piece of material outside the nucleus exhibits connections of theme (promise of salvation to the whole nation, with foreign nations sharing in the salvation event) and vocabulary with Second Isaiah²⁷⁹ and tone (conciliatory) (as do 60-62), it should be ascribed to Third Isaiah and removed from its immediate context. This assumption leads him to attribute 57:14-21, 65:16b-25, and 66:6-16 along with 60-62 to Third Isaiah²⁸⁰. Hanson criticizing Westermann’s method described it as “faulted because of its rigidity. The entity Third Isaiah becomes absolutely static. Since he is conciliatory to the whole nation in chapters 60-62, he may not be held responsible for the

²⁷⁷ *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, 1985, 521.

²⁷⁸ *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 296-308; Grace Emmerson provides the diagram which presents Westermann’s concentric design of Isa. 56-66 (*Isaiah 56-66*, p. 20).

²⁷⁹ The parallels between 60-62 and Second Isaiah have been listed by Hanson (*Dawn*, pp. 60-61). However, there are subtle differences. In chapter 60, for example, the restoration described is not tied to any historical personages or events, as was the case in Second Isaiah where everything was linked to the advent of Cyrus and the fall of Babylon. Another subtle difference can be seen in Isa. 60:21 and 61:7 with the introduction of the theme of possession of the land (cf. 57:13c; 58:14) which is absent in Second Isaiah (Hanson, *Dawn*, pp. 62, 63).

²⁸⁰ *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 296, 307; cf. Sekine, *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, pp. 43-65, 112-120, 165-178.

charges levelled in chapter 59 against transgressors. Since he is generous²⁸¹ in his attitude toward foreigners in chapter 60, he could not have recited the oracle in 63:1-6²⁸². Besides, Westermann's approach is itself guilty of ignoring the relation of a verse or passage to its context. He also fails to take into consideration the possibility that one author could have been dependent upon, or could have developed more than one tradition. In the second part of this Thesis I will try to demonstrate that the scribe of Isa. 56-66 has used apart from the tradition of the so-called Second Isaiah also the wisdom tradition.

In the following discussion I will provide a possible delimitation of the units in Isa. 56-66 based not on a traditio-historical approach but on a literary level, and criticism on the divisions of Isa. 56-66 made by Westermann and other commentators.

Isaiah 56-66 is one anthology with a recurring pattern of certain themes. As I have already stressed above the word "anthology" has the meaning of collection in this study.

Isaiah 56-66 is divided into five structural units²⁸³ : 1. 56:1-57:21; 2. 58:1-59:21; 3. 60:1-63:6; 4. 63:7-65:25; 5. 66:1-24 (the concluding unit which recapitulates the themes of the previous ones).

²⁸¹ Below in this chapter in the discussion of the structure of Isa. 60:1-63:6 and especially in the discussion in Chapter 3, I have demonstrate that in 60-62 the attitude towards the nations is not generous but a hostile one. The nations have a subservient role.

²⁸² *Dawn*, p. 40, note 24.

²⁸³ Recently Wolfgang Lau (in his book *Schriftgelehrte Prophetie in Jes 56-66. Eine Untersuchung zu den literarischen Bezügen in den letzten elf Kapiteln des Jesajabuches*, 1994) has demonstrated that the majority of the material in Isaiah 56-66 refers to older literary material in Isaiah 40-55 and it should be identified as "scribal prophecy". In the basis of their distinctive theological themes and references to biblical literature Lau identifies in Isaiah 56-66 four major collections. These include:

a) Isa. 60-62, the work of "Trito-Isaiah", that employs traditions from the Torah and Prophets. The focus of this literary unit is the pilgrimage to Zion (60), the people of Zion and the call of the prophet (61), and the city Zion (pp. 22-117).

b) Isa. 57:14-21; 66:7-14a; 65:16b-25 (Tradition-circle I) which employ the tradition of "Trito-Isaiah". According to Lau, the focus of these texts is the unconditional salvific action of YHWH to the whole community (pp. 118-142).

c) Isa. 66:18-24; 57:3-13; 66:1-4, 5f, 14b-17; 65:1-7, 8-12, 13-16a (Tradition-circle II) which have a cultic concern (pp. 143-202).

d) Isa. 59:1-21; 56:9-12; 57:1-2; 58:1-14 (Tradition-circle III) which have a social concern and in which Lau finds re-use only of the material of "Deutero-Isaiah" and

The literary markings, significant in the structuring of the material, are the rhetorical devices of inclusio²⁸⁴, keywords and repetition²⁸⁵, and the literary device of antithesis²⁸⁶. The present work does not claim to be exhaustive in pointing out literary devices, but simply attempts to show structural elements which argue for the integrity of the units under consideration.

“Trito-Isaiah (Isa. 60-62)” (pp. 203-261). He has overlooked the re-applications of material from Isa. 1-39.

Isa. 56:1-8; 63:1-6; 63:7-64:11 are not included in Lau’s scheme of “scribal prophecy”. They are, according to him, “separate, individual traditions” (pp. 262-315). On the discussion of these passages I have shown that they can also be identified as the result of scribal work, especially mantological exegesis (see below).

Lau has overlooked the fact that Isa. 57:14-21; 66:7-14a; 65:16b-25 are promises of salvation which are given not to the whole community but to the righteous only, and these promises of salvation are followed or preceded by oracles of punishment for the wicked. Therefore these passages have to be seen as integral parts of their ‘salvation for the righteous-punishment for the wicked’ contexts.

²⁸⁴ Watson defines the inclusio or envelope figure as “the repetition of the same phrase or sentence at the beginning and end of a stanza or poem” (*Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, Sheffield 1984, pp. 282-283). M. Kessler outlines four functions of the inclusio: to frame a unit, to stabilize the enclosed material, to emphasize by repetition, to create rhetorical connections within the intervening material (Inclusio in the Hebrew Bible, *Semitics* 6 (1978), 44-49).

²⁸⁵ “A certain number of repeated words which by their sound, position within the poem and meaning function as keywords” (Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, p. 287). “Particularly significant and useful for perceiving the structure and distinctiveness of a given poem is the use of a rare or unusual keyword or repeated term, since these are much stronger indicators of coherence and relationship between stanzas than the repetition of common terms” (Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction in Trito-Isaiah*, 1995, p. 20; cf. M. Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, Sheffield 1992, p. 56). “A word of caution is necessary. The fact that words reappear in each of the literary units does not signify a unity among them; rather, ...the discovery of such affinities gives rise to the possibility that certain motifs are repeated, thus pointing to a sense of continuity among the literary units” (Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 28). According to Polan, “*themes* refers to the principal elements of unity in the poem, while *motifs* refers to the various ideas which, in concert with one another, establish the themes. For example, the motifs of *the Lord’s guidance, comfort, and protection* may work together as a theme of *salvation*” (*idem*, p. 28, note 76).

²⁸⁶ Arguing for the unity of Isaiah 56:9-57:21 and using the literary device of antithesis, Polan comments that this device “demonstrates a way of perceiving how the various strophes can be read as part of a whole”. And below: “The contrasts found at the conclusions of the stanzas present a broad way of seeking how this device unites the poem, saving it from the sense of dispersion that most commentators see here” (Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, 1986, pp. 160, 161).

1. Isa. 56:1-57:21

The first unit comprises a) Isa. 56:1-8 and b) 56:9-57:21.

a) Isa. 56:1-8.

Westermann regards vv. 1-2 and 3-8 as independent entities which form, together with 66:18-24, a framework for the material in chapters 56-66²⁸⁷.

Isa. 56:1-8 however, is framed by typical expressions of beginning and conclusion: כה אמר יהוה 'Thus says YHWH' (56:1) and נאם אדני יהוה 'Oracle of YHWH God' (56:8). It is also framed by the inclusio which is created by the parallel use of the verbs קבץ 'to gather' and בוא 'to come' showing YHWH's salvific action in His coming to and gathering of the people, including peoples from outside Israel within this process of gathering (cf. 66:18²⁸⁸). These verbs are used together in Isa. 43:5; 49:18; 60:1-4; 66:18 in the same context of the description of YHWH's salvation and the gathering of the dispersed of Israel²⁸⁹. According to Polan, "the theme of salvation frames the literary unit, stressing God's redemption which is soon to come"²⁹⁰.

The repetition of the terms שמר 'to keep, to observe' (vv. 1, 2(twice), 4, 6), חזק 'to hold fast' (vv. 2, 4, 6), שבת 'sabbath' (vv. 2, 4, 6), and חלל 'to profane' (vv. 2, 6) gives coherence to the main body of the unit. These terms underline the author's central theme of the necessity of human response to the imminent divine intervention²⁹¹.

b) Westermann²⁹² and Whybray²⁹³ distinguish two literary units for Isa. 56:9-57:21: 56:9-57:13 and 57:14-21.

²⁸⁷ *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 305-306, 307.

²⁸⁸ Reading באה 'I came' with BHS as Qal active participle בא 'I am coming'.

²⁸⁹ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 53; cf. Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 51.

²⁹⁰ Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 52.

²⁹¹ *Idem*, p. 46; cf. Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, pp. 53-54.

²⁹² *Isaiah 40-66*, 1969, pp. 302, 325;

²⁹³ *Isaiah 40-66*, NCBC, 1975 (reprint 1990), pp. 199-200.

In structural terms, the literary device of antithesis and the devices of inclusio and keywords testify for the unity and coherence of 56:9-57:21. A number of antitheses between the righteous and the wicked binds together the unit²⁹⁴.

In 56:9-57:1-2 there is an antithesis between the leaders and the righteous by means of the root שכב 'to sleep'. While the leaders presently dream and sleep (56:10: שכב), the righteous are promised that they will have peace and rest in the future (57:2: משכב 'bed, grave'²⁹⁵).

By means of the same root (שכב) there is a second antithesis between the righteous who 'rest in their beds משכב' (57:2) and the idolaters who 'have set their משכב' for their illicit practices (57:7).

By means of the word שלום 'peace' a third antithesis between the righteous and the wicked is created in 57:1-2 and 57:20-21. In 57:1-2 the righteous die, but find peace, while in 57:20-21 'there is no peace for the wicked'²⁹⁶ (57:21).

By means of the same root שלום 'peace' and the words שקט 'to rest' (57:20a) and נוח 'to rest' (57:2b) a fourth antithesis is created by contrasting the wicked and their inability to find 'peace' and 'rest' (57:20-21) with all the righteous who will inherit 'peace' (57:19b) and find 'rest on their beds' (57:2b).

The polemic character of 56:9-57:21 and of much of the material in Isaiah 56-66 has already been noticed by P. Hanson²⁹⁷ and Br. Schramm²⁹⁸. The judgement of the wicked (given in 57:13b, 20-21) and the salvation of the righteous (described in 57:13c, 15c, 18, 19) is central

²⁹⁴ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 69; cf. Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 161.

²⁹⁵ For the use of the term משכב to mean 'grave', see Scullion, *Some Difficult Texts in Is. cc. 56-66*, *UF* 4 (1972), 109; cf. Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 77.

²⁹⁶ The 'wicked' in 57:20-21 are both the idolaters (their works being described in 57:3-13a) and the corrupt leaders (whose works are described in 56:9-12). The judgement of both of them is announced in 57:13b (*the wind will carry them all כלם off*).

²⁹⁷ *Dawn*, pp. 42, 186.

²⁹⁸ *The Opponents of Third Isaiah*, Sheffield 1995, pp. 38, 126.

in the whole poem and testifies for its unity. The contrast between righteous and wicked reflects the ethical dualism found in all the eschatologies of the apocalyptic works.

The verb **יכל** 'to be able' serves as an inclusio found in 56:10b and in 57:20a. In 56:10b the 'watchmen' of Israel are described as 'dumb dogs that cannot **לא יוכלו** bark', preferring to 'dream' and 'sleep'. In 57:20a the wicked are portrayed as 'the tossing sea, that cannot **לא יוכל** rest'. Both passages demonstrate the incapacities of the leaders and the wicked²⁹⁹.

The repetition of the word **בצע** 'unjust gain' in parallel with the word **דרך** 'way' also serves to bind 56:9-57:21 together³⁰⁰. In 56:11c the leaders are described as 'turning to their own way **לדרכם פנו**' 'each to his own unjust gain **איש לבצעו**'. In 57:17 it is 'the gain made by violence **בצע**' of the people which caused YHWH's anger in the past and angers Him also in the present because both the leaders and idolaters 'continued apostate in the way of their heart **בדרך לבו**'.

Apart from contexts of reproach, the word **דרך** 'way' is also used in contexts of promise. Thus, 57:14 describes what YHWH is about to prepare for the faithful in the community, that is, the removal of the 'obstruction (the sin of the wicked) from His people's way **מדרך**' so that they will continue their relationship with Him. This use of the word **דרך** in contexts of both reproach and promise reinforces the antithetical character of Isa. 56:9-57:21 and the coherence and unity of the poem³⁰¹.

²⁹⁹ Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 25.

³⁰⁰ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, pp. 69, 70.

³⁰¹ *Idem*, p. 70; cf. Polan, *In the Ways of Justice*, p. 98; Polan provides and analyzes a number of other roots which are used in contrasting situations of judgement and promise. These are: **משכב** 'couch' (57:2: a promise; 57:7-8: a judgement), **חלך** 'to walk' (57:2: a promise; 57:17b: a judgement), **קרב** 'to draw near' (57:3: a judgement; 57:19b: a promise), **רחק** 'to be far off' (57:6: a judgement; 57:18: a promise), **נחם** 'to comfort' (57:9: a judgement; 57:19b: a promise), **חר** 'mountain' (57:7: a judgement; 57:13: a promise), **שפל** 'to descend' (57:9: a judgement; 57:15: a promise), **חיה** 'to live' (57:10: a judgement; 57:15: a promise), **עשה** 'to do' (57:12: a judgement; 57:16: a promise),

2. Isa. 58:1-59:21

58:1b (והגד לעמי פשעם ולבית יעקב חטאתם) and 59:20³⁰² (ובא לציון גואל ולשבי פשע ביעקב) mark the beginning and end, respectively, of the unit. 58:1b contains an indictment against ‘*the house of Jacob*’ for their ‘*sins*’. In 59:20 YHWH brings salvation to ‘*those in Jacob who turn back from transgression*’.

“The possibility that 59:1-20 continues 58:1-14 is suggested by the absence of a question or complaint by the people at the opening of chapter 59. The people’s complaint is quoted in 58:3a, but there is no reference to a fresh complaint at the beginning of chapter 59”³⁰³.

A number of roots function throughout 58:1-59:20 as keywords which serve to mark it out as a coherent and distinctive poem³⁰⁴:

a) The words און ‘*wickedness*’ (58:9b; 59:4, 6, 7, 20), עון ‘*iniquity*’ (59:2a, 3, 12b), פשע ‘*transgression*’ (58:1; 59:12a, 12b, 13), חטאה ‘*sin*’ (58:1; 59:2b, 12a), רשע ‘*wickedness*’ (58:4, 6), עמל ‘*mischievous*’ (59:4), and רע ‘*harm, evil*’ (59:7, 15a, 15b (verb רעע)) are central terms in the poem as a description for the people’s sinful activity.

b) The roots צדק and שפט also function as keywords expressing one of the principal themes of the unit, the relationship between the the people’s social and cultic wrongdoing and the delay of God’s salvation. In 58:2 there is a general reference to the absence of *righteousness* and *justice* while they continue to engage in cultic activity (*like a nation that does righteousness* צדקה and does not forsake the ordinance (justice) משפט of their God). In 58:8b the

רוח ‘*wind, spirit*’ (57:13: a judgement; 57:15, 16: a promise) (*In the Ways of Justice*, p. 169).

³⁰² The majority of commentators agree that verse 21 is a later prose addition (e.g. Vermeylen, *Du Prophete Isaie a l’apocalyptique*, vol. 2, 1978, p. 471; Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66, IB 5*, 1956, pp. 687, 696; Koenen, *Ethik*, 1990, p. 66).

³⁰³ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 99.

³⁰⁴ *Idem*, pp. 99-101.

word **צדק** is used in the context of the description of the people's future era of salvation (*your deliverance **צדקך** will go before you, the glory of YHWH will be your rearguard*). In 59:4 the two roots are used in parallel to describe the corrupted legal system (*No one pleads in court justly **בצדק**, no one enters into controversy faithfully **באמונה***). In 59:8a (*there is no justice **אין משפט** in their courses (of life)*) and 59:15b (*YHWH saw, and it was evil in his eyes that there was no justice **אין משפט***) the root **שפט** is used to describe the absence of justice. In 59:9 the two roots are used to describe the remoteness of salvation (*justice **משפט** is far from us, and deliverance **צדקה** does not reach us*). In 59:11b the word **משפט** is used in parallel with the word **ישועה** 'salvation' to describe the absence of salvation (*We hope for justice **למשפט**, but there is no one. (We hope) for salvation **לישועה**, but it is far from us*). The ethical use of the terms **משפט** and **צדקה** reappears in 59:14a (*Justice **משפט** is driven back and righteousness **צדקה** stands at a distance*). In 59:16b-17a the soteriological use of **צדק** reappears in the description of YHWH's saving and judging intervention (v. 16b: *His own arm gave victory **ותושע** to him and his deliverance **וצדקתו** upheld him*; v. 17a: *He put on righteousness **צדקה** as a breastplate, and a helmet of victory (salvation) **ישועה** on his head*).

The literary device of antithesis testifies also for the unity and coherence of 58:1-59:20. There is an antithesis between true and false fasting (58:3-12) and sabbath observance (58:13-14; cf. 59:1-15a: violence, perversion of justice, and moral corruption) and an antithesis between the destiny of the wicked (punishment: 59:18a^β, 18b, 19) and that of the righteous (salvation: 59:20) (ethical dualism on moral grounds).

3. Isa. 60:1-63:6

The unity and coherence of chapters 60-62 has been recognized by all critics³⁰⁵. P.A. Smith³⁰⁶ has listed a number of factors which reinforce the unity of these chapters. These are:

1. The message of chs. 60-62 is entirely one of salvation for Jerusalem and her people.
2. Much of the material in chs. 60-62 is addressed to Jerusalem herself (60:1-22; 62:1-12).
3. Chs. 60-62 envisage no division within the people. The people as a whole is the recipient of salvation (60:21; 62:10). All Jerusalem's people will be righteous (60:21; 61:3).
4. A number of prominent and consistent themes stand out within chs. 60-62: the gathering of Zion's children from the nations (60:4, 9; 62:10); the wealth of the nations flowing to Jerusalem (60:5-7, 16; 61:6); the rebuilding and glorification of Jerusalem (60:10, 13, 17; 61:4; 62:2, 7); the internal and external security of Jerusalem and her people (60:12, 14, 18; 62:8); the glorification of YHWH through these saving events (60:16, 21; 61:3); the change from shame to joy in the new era of salvation (60:5; 61:3, 7-8); the service of Israelites by foreigners (60:10; 61:5); God's favour and acceptance (60:7, 10; 61:2); and the eschatological renaming of Jerusalem and her people (60:14, 18; 61:3, 6; 62:4, 12).

In his structural scheme based on his traditio-historical approach Westermann separates 60-62 and 63:1-6, because, according to him, 63:1-6 has a negative attitude towards the nations which is contrasted with the positive and universalistic attitude of 60-62³⁰⁷.

Isa. 60:1-63:6 is marked by the literary device of antithesis which unites 60-62 and 63:1-6. By means of the root נקם 'vengeance' an antithesis is created between Israel and the nations. In 61:2aß YHWH's *day of vengeance* יום נקם is a) against the injustice within Israel with His ultimate goal to

³⁰⁵ Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 1969, 296-298; Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66*, 1975, 229; Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 1975, pp. 46-76; Sekine, *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung (Jes. 56-66)*, 1989, p. 101.

³⁰⁶ *Rhetoric and Redaction in Trito-Isaiah*, 1995, pp. 37-38.

³⁰⁷ *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 305, 361, 384.

establish righteousness in the community as a whole (cf. 61:3c: *They will be called oaks of righteousness*), and b) against the nations since their subservient status in relation to Israel is envisioned in 61:5-6 (cf. 60:10, 11b β , 12, 14a, 16a). The expectation of YHWH's punitive action against the nations is fulfilled in 63:1-6. According to Smith, "the emphasis in 61:2 may be on the deliverance of the author's own community, but 63:1-6 draws out the implications of this for the other nations"³⁰⁸. Commenting on the use of the phrase יום נקם in the context of Isa. 34:8, A.S. Herbert suggests that it has "a positive as well as a negative meaning, putting right what is wrong and restoring the rights of one who is oppressed"³⁰⁹. "For Jerusalem and her people to be liberated and glorified, the nations (and particularly Edom) must be subjugated. This is both a function of the divine justice because of Edom's mistreatment of Israel, and also a necessary dimension of Israel's liberation and regaining of her rightful territory and status. Similarly, the military imagery in 62:8-9 seems to suggest that YHWH is prepared to protect his people and their interests with force. Thus, just as chapters 34-35 set the return of Zion's children in the context of a universal act of judgement with specific emphasis upon Edom, so 63:1-6 places chapters 60-62 in the same context"³¹⁰. In 60:1-63:6 the righteous Israel will be saved (60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a) and the nations must be destroyed (60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6)³¹¹. The ethical dualism in this unit has an ethnic character.

³⁰⁸ *Idem*, p. 42; cf. F. Holmgren, YHWH the Avenger: Isaiah 63:1-6, in J.J. Jackson and M. Kessler, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 1974, p. 141-142.

³⁰⁹ *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah. Chapters 1-39*, 1973, p. 193 (direct quotation from Smith's *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 42).

³¹⁰ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 42.

³¹¹ The strong sense of nationalism in 60-62 has been pointed out by Whybray (*Isaiah 40-66*, 1975, 231); cf. Sekine who emphasizes the nationalism of Isa. 60 (*Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, 72-74).

The affiliation of 63:1-6 with chapters 60-62 is also reinforced by a number of links of vocabulary, imagery and theme which P.A. Smith³¹² also has listed:

1. Like chapters 60-62, but as opposed to chapters 56-59 and 65-66, 63:1-6 never uses divine speech formulae such as **כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה** or **נְאֻם יְהוָה**.

2. In 62:1 the prophet, perhaps performing the role of a watchman, will not be silent until Jerusalem's vindication (**צִדְקָה**) and salvation (**יְשׁוּעָה**) are clearly perceived. In 63:1 the prophet, again perhaps acting as watchman, this time addressing an approaching warrior, is told in his vision that it is YHWH himself who is drawing near '*speaking in truthfulness* **צִדְקָה**, *mighty to save* **לְהוֹשִׁיעַ**'. Thus, 63:1-6 could be understood as a fulfilment, in visionary terms, of 62:1-2.

3. In 62:11 the prophet tells the people to look because their *salvation* **יְשׁוּעָה** comes **בָּא**. The third-person suffixes in this verse clearly refer this to YHWH. Then in 63:1 it is YHWH who comes **בָּא**...*mighty to save* **לְהוֹשִׁיעַ**. In this way 63:1-6 follows on from the end of chapter 62 and forms a fitting conclusion to 60:1-63:6. YHWH has now arrived.

4. The passive participle of **גָּאֵל** (otherwise only in 35:9; 51:10; Psalm 107:2) serves to link 62:12 and 63:4.

In parallel with chapters 34-35, 60:1-63:6 has set the salvation of Israel and the return of all her dispersed children in the context of an act of divine universal judgement. YHWH is coming to judge all peoples, to take vengeance upon Israel's oppressors (particularly Edom), and to initiate the service of Jerusalem and her people by the foreign kings and nations³¹³.

4. Isa. 63:7-65:25

³¹² Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 43; cf. Holmgren, YHWH the Avenger, *Rhetorical Criticism*, pp. 141-143.

³¹³ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, p. 43.

Some commentators noting the literary connection between the question-answer device have clearly joined Isa. 63:7-64:11 with chapter 65³¹⁴. To the questions of the people in 63:11 (*Where is the one who brought them up out of the sea...Where is the one who put in the midst of them his holy spirit*), 63:15 (*where is your zeal and your mighty deeds*), and 64:11 (*Will you restrain yourself at these things, O YHWH? Will you keep silent, and afflict us so severely?*) the answer is given by YHWH in 65:1 (*I let myself be consulted by those who did not ask. I let myself be found by those who did not seek me. I say: 'Here I am, here I am', to a nation that did not call on my name*). To the lament of the people that 'our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary' (63:18) and 'Your holy cities have become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and beautiful house, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned by fire, and all our precious things have become ruins' (64:9-10), YHWH promises peace from external enemies (65:22a.bβ: *They shall not build and aliens inhabit. They shall not plant and aliens eat...and my chosen ones shall enjoy the work of their hands*; v. 23aβ: *(they shall not) bear children in sudden terror*; v. 23aα: *they shall not work in vain*) and prosperity (v. 21: *They shall build houses and live in them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit*).

In addition to the question-answer device commentators³¹⁵ have noticed the repeated vocabulary which fosters a sense of unity in 63:7-65:

a) In 63:19a YHWH is reproached as an owner who is indifferent to the loss of his property, that is, His people (His name **שם** has never been called **לא-נקרא** over them). In 65:1 YHWH condemns the people as 'a nation that did not (call on His name) call Him **לא-קרא** with His name **שם**'.

³¹⁴ Aage Bentzen, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, vol. 2, Copenhagen 1948-1949, p. 110; cf. P.E. Bonnard, *Le Second Isaie, son disciple et leurs editeurs. Isaie 40-66*, Etudes Bibliques, Paris 1972, pp. 462, 463; Muilenburg, *The Book of Isaiah. Chapters 40-66*, IB 5, 1956, 744-745; Polan, *In the Ways*, 1986, p. 16, n. 47; Steck, (1987)1991f, 221-225; Koenen, *Ethik*, 1990, 161; Beuken, *The Main Theme*, JSOT 47 (1990), 76; Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, 1995, 132.

³¹⁵ Bonnard, *Le Second Isaie*, 1972, p. 462, note 1; cf. Muilenburg, *The Book of Isaiah*, IB 5 1956, 744-745.

- b) In 63:10 the people are accused that in the past *'they rebelled מרו and vexed YHWH's holy spirit'*. In 65:2 YHWH accuses them as *'a rebellious people סורר'*.
- c) In 63:17 the people acknowledging their sins ask *'Why, O YHWH, do you make us stray from your ways מדרכיך'*. In 64:4a the people pleading for YHWH's intervention admit *'you meet with kindness with the joyful and (with) the one doing right who remember you in your ways בדרכיך'*. In 65:2 YHWH in His answer to them accuses them that they *'walk in a way הדרך that is not good, following their own devices'*.
- d) In 64:1 the new epiphany longed for is described as *'fire אש kindles brushwood or fire אש causes water to boil'*. In 65:5 YHWH's anger at the idolatrous rites is shown by the expressions *'these are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all day אש יקדת'*.
- e) In 64:5, 6, 8 the people confess their *'iniquity עון'*. In 65:7 the *'iniquities עונות'* of the current generation will be added to *'the iniquities עונות of their fathers'* who had done the same thing (cultic abuses) in the past.
- f) In 64:11 the people's final plea to YHWH is: *'Will you keep silent? תחשה'*. In 65:6 YHWH threatens that He *'will not keep silent לא אחשה'*.
- g) In 63:18 in their description of their present distress (the destruction of the Temple) the people lament *'for a little while your holy people took possession ירשו עמ-קדשך'*. In 65:9 YHWH's *'chosen'*, His *'servants'* are given the promise that they will *'inherit יורש the land (my mountains)'*.
- h) In 63:9a YHWH saved His people during the exodus *'in all their distress צרתם'*. In 65:16c the assurance that *'the former troubles הצרות will be forgotten and hidden from YHWH's eyes'* is given.
- i) In 63:17b the *'servants עבדיך'* of YHWH are *'the tribes of His heritage'*, that is, *'all the people'* (64:8; cf. 63:7: *the house of Israel*; 63:18: *your holy people*). In 65:8, 9, 13(thrice), 14, 15 the *'servants עבדי'* of YHWH are only the faithful among the people in Israel, that is, His *'chosen'* ones (65:9, 15,

22bβ), the ‘people who seek Him out’ (65:10; cf. 65:19a, 22bα: *my people*; 65:23b: *YHWH’s blessed ones*; 64:3: *the one who waits for him*).

j) In 64:5 (twice) the people confess their sin (*We have all כלנו become like one who is unclean...We all כלנו fade like a leaf*) and in 64:8 in their final plea to YHWH they stress YHWH’s relation to his people (*we are all כלנו your people*). In 65:12 YHWH will destroy all the unfaithful (*all of you כלכם shall bow down to the slaughter*; cf. 65:8 where YHWH’s judgement, designed to destroy only the unrighteous, is carefully administered ‘*not do destroy the whole הכל*’).

Commentators in their treatment of Isa. 65:1-25 often split it up into various layers of material. Recently Sekine has broken down Isa. 65 into three layers. He ascribes vv. 16b-23, 25 to Third Isaiah, vv. 1a, 1b, 24 to a final redactor, and vv. 2-16a to an independent source³¹⁶. Westermann also has divided the material in 65 into three separate layers. Firstly, he regards 65:16b-25 as part of the nucleus of the proclamation of Third Isaiah and he links it directly with chapters 60-62 and 57:14-20³¹⁷. According to Westermann, both 65:16b-25 and 60-62 announce salvation to all Israel and both have similar style with Second Isaiah. Secondly, he regards 65:1-16a as an independent addition, with v. 8 as a transitional verse from vv. 1-7, and thirdly, v. 25 along with v. 17a as a later (apocalyptic) addition³¹⁸. Westermann’s claim that 65:16b-25 announces salvation to the whole nation rests on the assumption that these verses were originally separate from their present context and formed a part of the nucleus of Third Isaiah (60-62; 57:14-20). “If this assumption is not made, the people spoken of in this unit could easily be the faithful ‘servants’ of 65:1-16a. In other words, the new people of Jerusalem would not be the whole nation but ‘my people who seek me out’ (65:10b). This is

³¹⁶ *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, pp. 43-65, 165-178.

³¹⁷ Cf. Sekine, *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, pp. 177-178 (65:16b-23, 25); Koenen, *Ethik*, pp. 176-177 (65:16b-24).

³¹⁸ *Isaiah 40-66*, 1969, pp. 303, 306, 307, 403, 411.

actually suggested by the fact that עַמִּי never appears in chapters 60-62 as a designation for Israel, but does occur in 65:19, 22, which links up with 65:10b”³¹⁹. As far as concerns the similarity of style with Second Isaiah, one must ask whether this is a safe criterion to assign a text to the author of chapters 60-62 (for Westermann Third Isaiah). 65:16b-25 has affinities with the message of Second Isaiah in vv. 16a and 17 (cf. 43:18-19), v. 19b (cf. 51:11), in the terms *new creation* and the *former things*, in the summonses to joy, and in the designations for YHWH’s people. However, 65:16b-25 uses the language of Second Isaiah but also the language of 60-62. In 65:21-23 there is an inner-textual exegesis of 62:8-9. In 62:8-9 it is stated that enemies and foreigners are the aggressors from whom the new population will be protected. In 65:21-23, on the other hand, the emphasis is much more upon the inhabitants themselves, and the identity of the aggressors is left open and vague³²⁰.

Hanson³²¹ regards chapter 65 as an integrated whole on the basis of repeated terminology in contrasting situations of judgement and promise. The literary features which demonstrate that Isa. 65:1-25 is “a tightly knit unit” are:

- a) 65:1-2 and 10 constitute an inclusio with the contrast between ‘*my people who seek me out* דֹרְשׁוּנִי’ (v. 10b) and ‘*a rebellious people* סוֹרֵר’ (v. 2) by whom ‘*I let myself be consulted* נִדְרַשְׁתִּי’ but ‘*who did not seek me* בִּקְשׁוּנִי’ (v. 1).
- b) 65:10 and 11 bind together the first and second section of the oracle with the contrast between ‘*my people who seek me out*’ (v. 10b) and ‘*but you who forsake YHWH...*’, the type of contrast used repeatedly in 56-66 (cf. 57:2-3: (2) *Peace will come (only for them); those who walk uprightly will rest on their beds.* (3) *But you, come here, you sons of a conjurer, offspring of an adulterer and of her who commits fornication*).

³¹⁹ Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, 1995, p. 145.

³²⁰ For further points of connection and difference between the material in 60-62 and that in 65:16b-25 see Smith, *Rhetoric and Redaction*, 1995, 145-148.

³²¹ Dawn, p. 135.

c) 65:12 and 24 manifest conscious contrasts which serve to unify that section: ‘I called קראתי, but you did not answer עניתם, I spoke דברתי, but you did not listen שמעתם’ (v. 12b), and ‘Before they call יקראו I will answer אענה, and while they are still speaking מדברים I will hear אשמע’ (v. 24).

d) The divine first person is used throughout.

Taken as a whole, an antithesis between the destiny of the unfaithful and the one of the faithful is created and binds 65:1-25 together and testifies for its unity and coherence. The destiny of YHWH’s servants is salvation and it is described in 65:8-10, 13b α .c α .d α , 14a, 15b, 16a, 18-24, 25a.c. The destiny of the unfaithful is punishment and it is described in 65:6-7, 11-12, 13b β .c β .d β , 14b, 15a β , 25b. The structure of the chapter resembles many of the oracles of Isa. 56-66.

5. Isa. 66:1-24

Westermann regards 66:7-14 as a part of the proclamation of the prophet Third Isaiah whose nucleus he finds in 60-62³²². He also claims that 66:18-24 is made up of two distinct oracles, 66:18-19, 21 and 66:22-24 which have been secondarily fused. Because the former breathes a spirit of universalism and the latter a spirit of particularism and judgement, they must have been originally separate³²³.

66:1-24 is a conflation of the eschatological hopes of the previous collections of Isa. 56-66. The literary device of antithesis binds together the unit, an antithesis between faithful and sinner and their destiny (salvation for the faithful: 66:5, 7-14a.b α , 21; destruction of wicked: 66:3a β .b-4, 5, 6ab, 16, 17; 24).

³²² Cf. Koenen, *Ethik*, pp. 198-200; Sekine, *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung*, p. 182.

³²³ *Isaiah 40-66*, pp. 306, 307, 423-429; Hanson has demonstrated that the themes of salvation and judgement are so intimately intertwined in many of the oracles of Third Isaiah that division of the oracles based purely upon this distinction not only is illegitimate but also completely misses the sense of the oracles (*Dawn*, pp. 106-107, 119-120, 143-145, 150, 154, 162-163, 168, 180, 187, 197).

Despite the fact that Isaiah 56-66 is divided into five units these chapters are a unity with inner coherence. The attitude to the temple and the worship in it is the same in all the chapters. In 56:2, 4, 6 there is a radical exaltation of sabbath-keeping as the primary criterion by which one becomes (or remains) a member of the cultic community. In 58:13 traditional forms of sabbath observance are re-affirmed but this practice is re-interpreted with an apparent social dimension. Also there is no rejection of the sacrificial system. In 56:7 the sacrifices of the foreigners who want to become proselytes are accepted (cf. 60:7). 62:9 refers to the practice of bringing first-fruits of grain and wine to be offered in YHWH's sanctuary after harvest. The MT in 61:8a (reading *For I, YHWH, love justice, I hate robbery with burnt offering*) is a hint at YHWH's opposition to sacrifice followed by unjust behaviour (*robbery*). 66:3 contains accusation against people who perform legitimate cultic acts (to *slaughter an ox*, to *sacrifice a lamb*, to *present a grain offering*, to *make a memorial with frankincense*) but who at the same time act immorally or who practice forbidden and unacceptable rites. Fasting in its traditional sense is not excluded either. 58:6-7, 9b-10 emphasizes the inadequacy of fasting devoid of moral behaviour and social justice. In 60:13 there is an approbation of the temple (*The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the plane, and the pine, all together, to beautify my holy place, and I will glorify the place of my feet*). 66:1-2 does not reject the temple either (*Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, and what kind of place will be my rest?*). It is concerned with the true nature of YHWH's dwelling place with its system of sacrifices as 66:3 denotes. Priesthood in itself is not rejected either (cf. 61:6: *but you shall be called the priests of YHWH*, and 66:21: *And from them also I will take some for priests*).

1. Isaiah 56:1-57:21

a) Isaiah 56:1-8

כה אמר יהוה שמרו משפט ועשו צדקה
 כי־קרובה ישועתי לבוא וצדקתי להגלות:
 אשרי אנוש יעשה־זאת ובן־אדם יחזיק בה
 שמר שבת מחללו ושמר ידו מעשות כל־רע:
 ואל־יאמר בן־הנכר הנלוה אל־יהוה לאמר
 הבדל יבדילני יהוה מעל עמו
 ואל־יאמר הסרים הן אני עץ יבש:
 כי־כה אמר יהוה⁴
 לסריסים אשר ישמרו את־שבתותי
 ובחרו באשר חפצתי ומחזיקים בבריתי:
 ונתתי להם בביתי וחומתי יד ושם טוב מבנים ומבנות
 שם עולם אתן־לו אשר לא יכרת:
 ובני הנכר הנלוים על־יהוה⁶
 לשרתו ולאהבה את־שם יהוה להיות לו לעבדים
 כל־שמר שבת מחללו ומחזיקים בבריתי:
 והביאותים אל־הר קדשי ושמחתים בבית תפלתי⁷
 עולתיהם וזבחיהם לרצון על־מזבחי
 כי ביתי בית־תפלה יקרא לכל־העמים:
 נאם אדני יהוה מקבץ נדחי ישראל⁸
 עוד אקבץ עליו לנקבציו:

(1) (α) *Thus says YHWH:*

(aβ) *Maintain justice and do righteousness,*

(b) *for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance will be revealed.*

(2) (a) *Blessed is the man who does this (i.e. righteousness),*

and the son of man who holds it (i.e. righteousness) fast,

(bα) who keeps the sabbath without profaning it,

(bβ) and keeps his hand from doing any evil.

(3) (a) Do not let the foreigner, who has been joined to YHWH, say, 'YHWH will surely separate me from his people';

(b) Nor let the eunuch say, 'See, I am a dry tree'.

(4) For thus says YHWH:

"To the eunuchs who observe my sabbaths and choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant,

(5) I will give a monument (literally: hand) and a name in my house and within my walls, better than sons and daughters;

I will give them (literally: him) an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

(6) And the foreigners who are joined to me^a, to minister to me^b, to love my^c name, and to be my^d servants, every one who keeps the sabbath without profaning it, and holds fast my covenant-

(7) these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them glad in my house of prayer;

their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples".

(8) Oracle of YHWH God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel:

'I will gather yet others to him besides his gathered ones.

Textual notes:

(6) Emending the text (to YHWH^a, to minister to him^b, the name of YHWH^c, his^d servants) with BHS (to me^a, to minister to me^b, my name^c, his^d servants).

Isa. 56:1-8 is the first literary unit of Isa. 56:1-57:21 (the first structural unit in Isaiah 56-66), and it is concerned with certain conditions (ethical and religious conduct) on which any human being -not only foreigners and eunuchs- may participate in YHWH's salvation.

Isa. 56:1a is an ethical sermon (*maintain justice and do righteousness*) to all [any human being: *the man אָנוּשׁ...and the son of man בֶּן-אָדָם* (56:2a)] who would participate in YHWH's imminent salvific intervention which is proclaimed in 56:1b (*for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance will be revealed*).

The references to coming salvation (56:1b) and blessedness (56:2a) are placed in a conditional framework which is shaped by 56:1a (*maintain justice and do righteousness*) and 56:2b (*who keeps the sabbath without profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil*) with their exhortations to right action. Along with 56:8 (*I will gather yet others to him besides his gathered ones*), 56:1b (*for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance will be revealed*) lends an eschatological character to 56:1-8 and in this eschatological context 56:3-7 is to be understood (Smith, 1995, 63; cf. Polan, 1986, 54).

R. Rendtorff has traced the use (meaning) of the word 'righteousness' (צִדְקָה/צִדִּיק) in the book of Isaiah¹. In Isaiah 1-39 the word primarily denotes human conduct, frequently in connection with the word 'justice' (מִשְׁפָּט) (1:21, 27; 5:7; 9:6; 16:5; also 11:4f.; 26:9, 32:1, 16), but this combination of 'justice' and 'righteousness' also occurs in connection with the action of YHWH (5:16; 26:9; 28:17, 33:5). In Isaiah 40-55, by contrast, this connection is completely absent. Instead, the combination of 'righteousness' and 'salvation' (תְּשׁוּעָה/יִשׁוּעָה/יִשְׁע) is used for the actions of YHWH (45:8; 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8; with שְׁלוֹם 48:18; 54:13f.; also 41:2, 10; 42:6, 21; 45:13, 19, 21, 23f.; 54:14; of man, 46:12; 48:1; 51:1, 7) (Rendtorff, 1984, 312-313). The two pairs of concepts (*justice-righteousness* and *righteousness-salvation*) are linked in the first statement in Isaiah 56-66 (56:1); here at the same time the double theme of this part is indicated (cf. Rendtorff, 1994, 183-184).

By punning on the ethical and soteriological senses of the word צִדְקָה the author has contrived to imply that 'salvation' is to be achieved through the

¹ Zur Komposition des Buches Jesaja, *VT* 34 (1984), 295-320.

through the perfecting of human behaviour within the Jewish community (Whybray, 1975, 196-197).

In regard to Isa. 56:1a β , it has been suggested by Steck that there is a parallel between ‘*Maintain justice and do righteousness*’ and Isa. 1:17a (part of a YHWH speech, Isa. 1:10-17, containing instructions to the people, concerning proper service to YHWH and emphasizing moral considerations over ceremonial and cultic procedure): ‘*learn to do good, seek justice*’². In Isa. 1:17a the conception of a true religious devotion is presented: moral ethical behaviour (Gitay, 1991, 22), which is determined by the eschatological expectation of 1:18-20 (reward to the faithful to YHWH and punishment to the rebels). YHWH’s conditions for cleansing the people of their sins and their enjoyment of the land (1:18-19) are stated in 1:16-17 ((16) *Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil*, (17) *learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow*) (Sweeney, 1988, 120, 129). In 56:1a β the audience are exhorted to practise moral ethical behaviour (observance of righteousness) in the light of the imminent salvific intervention of YHWH which is directed to any human being (vv. 1-2), even to foreigners and eunuchs (vv. 3-7). YHWH’s salvation consists in the admission of the foreigners and eunuchs into the cult of YHWH (vv. 5, 7a), the transformation of the temple into a house of prayer for all nations (v. 7b), and the gathering of other gentile nations besides the outcasts of Israel to join his people Israel (v. 8).

56:1b reinterprets elements from Isaiah 40-55.

Koenen has noted that Isaiah 46:13 and 51:5-8 are two possible parallels which may be implied in 56:1b (1990, 13). The comparisons, not elaborated by him, are as follows:

Isaiah 46:13

² Zu jüngsten Untersuchungen von Jes. 56:1-8; 63:7-66:24, in *Studien zu Tritojesaja*, 1991, p. 247, note 115.

I bring near my deliverance (צדקתי), it is not far off, and my salvation (תשועתי) will not tarry; I will put salvation (תשועה) in Zion, for Israel my glory (תפארת).

In Isaiah 46:13 the emphasis is laid on YHWH and his direct intervention: *'I bring near my deliverance... I will put salvation in Zion'*, in a demonstration of the weakness of Babylon's gods in relation to YHWH (Sweeney, 1988, 79; J. Watts, 1987, 166). The participants in YHWH's salvation are Israelites. In 56:1-2 participants in the salvation are all human beings (*son of man*, not only foreigners and eunuchs) on condition that they practise a moral ethical (56:1a β , 2a.b β) and religious (56:2b α) behaviour.

Isaiah 51:5-8

(5) *I will bring near my deliverance (קרוב צדקי) swiftly, my salvation (ישועי) has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me and for my arm they hope.*

(6) *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation (ישועתי) will be forever, and my deliverance (צדקתי) will never be ended.*

(7) *Listen to me, you who know righteousness (צדק), you people who have my teaching in your hearts; do not fear the reproach of others, and do not be dismayed when they revile you.*

(8) *For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool; but my deliverance (צדקתי) will be forever, and my salvation (ישועתי) to all generations.*

The context of Isa. 51:5-8 is a proclamation by YHWH of salvation for Zion (Sweeney, 1988, 84-87). The nation's gaze is directed to the coming world-judgement in which heaven, earth and those who dwell in it are to be destroyed. When the end of the world comes, there is only one continuing security, YHWH's salvation which continues for ever (56:4-6).

V. 7b refers to people who are Israel's enemies. Israel is told, '*do not fear your enemies will perish, but YHWH's salvation is for ever*' (56:7-8) (Westermann, 1969, 235-237). Both Isa. 56:1 and 51:5-8 proclaim that YHWH's salvation is near. But while in 51:5-8 this substantiates a summons to the discouraged to hear, in 56:1 it is an admonition to act righteously.

Isa. 56:2 reveals that 56:1-8 has linguistic affinities with material found in the wisdom literature. The literary formula which is adopted in 56:2a (אשרי אנוש יעשה-זאת), that of a blessing, reflects the style of later poetical literature, especially of the wisdom tradition (Sehmsdorf, 1972, 545; Odeberg, 1931, 1, 36). Although Koenen attempted to separate 56:2 from 56:1 because 56:2 (along with 57:1 and 57:20-21) contains "wisdom" terms spoken not by YHWH, but by the redactor³, this is not a sufficient reason for separating it from 56:1, since there is in 56:1 a learned preoccupation with older prophecy, a feature which is typical of mantological exegesis (see above), and in 56:2b an inner-textual exegesis of 56:1aβ: the terms *this* (זאת) and *it* (בה) in v. 2a refer both to *righteousness* (56:1a, 2bβ) and to proper observance of the sabbath (56:2bα) (Whybray, 1975, 197). Isa. 56:2b, by reference to proper ethical (*keeps his hands from doing any evil*) and religious conduct (*keeps the sabbath without profaning it*), explains and interprets the initial exhortation, in 56:1aβ, to '*maintain justice and do righteousness*'.

The term אשרי '*Blessed*' expands the preceding oracle and it is not a word exclusively associated with the wisdom literature as Whybray has pointed out (1975, 197). The word is used in a wisdom context in the following passages: Psalms 1:1; 32:1, 2; 34:9; 40:5; 89:16; 94:12; 106:3; 112:1;

³ *Ethik und Eschatologie*, pp. 12, 15, 22; cf. E. Sehmsdorf, Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte von Jesaja 56-66 (I), ZAW 84 (1972), 545; P.A. Smith who, influenced by Whybray's *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament* (1974, pp. 98-99, 125, 126) criticized Koenen's thesis and stated that "the whole Isaiah tradition is marked by the influence of the wisdom tradition" (*Rhetoric and Redaction in Trito-Isaiah*, 1995, pp. 51). However, there is no room in Smith's and Whybray's argument for a mantological-wisdom influence in 56:1-8 as a whole.

119:1, 2; 127:5; 128:1, 2;⁴ Job 5:17, Proverbs 3:13; 8:32, 34; 14:21; 16:20; 20:7; 28:14; 29:18; Ecclesiasticus 10:17; Daniel 12:12; 1 Kings=2 Chronicles 9:7.

In regard to Isa. 56:2b β Steck (1991a, 247, n. 115) has noted that it is comparable to Isa. 1:15-16 [(15) *When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands יְדֵיכֶם are full of blood. (16) Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil רָע of your doings מַעַלְלֵיכֶם from before my eyes; cease to do evil הָרַע*] which repeats the instruction to the people in Jerusalem to stop doing evil while they are praying to YHWH. Though in 56:2b β the instruction is directed to all mankind (Israelites, foreigners and eunuchs alike) (אֲשֶׁרִי אָנוּשׁ), the re-interpretation of cultic practices, in both passages (1:15-16: prayer / 56:2b β : sabbath), in terms of moral behaviour denotes the intellectualism of the wisdom tradition (G. von Rad, 1972, 186-189; cf. Isa. 1:10-11; 56:3-7, 66:3: sacrifice; 58:13: sabbath; 58:3-12: fasting; 57:15, 66:1-2: YHWH's dwelling place) (see the discussion below in Isa. 58:6).

There is no rejection in 56:2 of the worship in the Temple. On the contrary, there is a radical exaltation of Sabbath-keeping as the primary criterion by which one becomes (or remains) a member of the cultic community (cf. the similar exaltation in Neh. 9:12-15). Hanson's thesis that there are two distinct religious mentalities in Isaiah 56-66 - the one against the Temple and the cult - is in contradiction of 56:1-8 where the temple, the sacrificial cult, and the observance of sabbath are all exalted⁵ (Schramm, 1995, 116-118).

Verses 3-7 draw attention to the special message, given in verses 1-2, for the foreigners and eunuchs. They are reassured that, if they heed the

⁴ Cf. R.B.Y. Scott, *The Way of Wisdom in the Old Testament*, 1971, pp. 192-201.

⁵ Hanson regards 56:1-8 as a later redactional addition "added to the oracles of Third Isaiah when they were gathered into a collection" (*Dawn*, 1975, 186).

general exhortations outlined in verses 1-2, they will be welcomed in the future worshipping community.

The foreigners who are referred to in Isa. 56:3a, 6, 7ab are “those of other nationalities who attached themselves to the Jewish exiles during their captivity in Babylon” (Smith, 1995, 64). Isa. 56:3a, 6, 7ab deals only with a very specific group of foreigners, namely, *those who have been joined to YHWH* הנלוה אל-יהוה (vv. 3a, 6). According to Blenkinsopp this phrase “means to embrace the YHWH-cult, to become a proselyte” (1988, 95; cf. Schramm, 1995, 120). Contrary to Fishbane who stated that 56:3-8 “permits all strangers, בני הנכר, to serve in the shrine” (1985, 138), there is no intention in Isa. 56:3a, 6, 7, 8 of granting membership in the community and participation in the temple worship to foreigners in general (cf. Isa. 66:21 where only *some of them* are taken *as priests and as Levites*). In Deut. 23:3-9 a list of foreign nations (Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Egyptians) are excluded from ‘*the assembly of YHWH*’. In 56:3a, 6, 7 the community is open only to the foreigners who want to become proselytes, and this constitutes a change on the Deuteronomic regulation. Fishbane has erroneously stated that 56:3-8 “permits all strangers, בני הנכר, to serve in the shrine” (1985, 138). The repetition of phrases, such as, ‘*the foreigner who has been joined to YHWH*’ (56:3a), ‘*the foreigners who are joined to me, to minister to me, to love my name, and to be my servants*’ (56:6) makes clear that Isa. 56:3-8 allows, not foreigners in general, but foreign proselytes to serve in the temple under certain conditions.

The criteria for becoming a proselyte that are given in 56:6 are the ‘*keeping*’ of ‘*sabbath*’ and ‘*covenant*’, that is, the same criteria that were applied to the restoration community itself in 56:1-2 (cf. Schramm, 1995, 121-123).

In Isa. 56:3b, 4, 5 the eunuch סרים, a person who is biologically unable to have offspring, is promised ‘*a monument and a name*’ within the temple.

Isa. 56:3b, 4, 5 re-interpret Deut. 23:2 [NRSV 23:1, *'no one whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall be admitted to the assembly of YHWH'*] (cf. Westermann, 1969, 312-313; Sekine, 1989, 34). The eunuchs according to Deut. 23:2 and Lev. 21:20, which use different terms, were excluded from the worshipping community.

In Isa. 56:4 the old regulation in Deut. 23:2 is cancelled and the conditions on which the eunuchs will be accepted in the community which worships YHWH (Isa. 56:5a α) are provided (Westermann, 1969, 313). These conditions are: *'observe God's sabbaths, choose what pleases God and hold fast his covenant'*. It was said in 56:2b α that the man who keeps the sabbath, one of the Ten commandments (Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15; cf. Exod. 31:13-16; Lev. 19:3,30 ; 26:2), is blessed. Here in Isa. 56:4, together with the *'fast holding of YHWH's covenant'*, it is a primary stipulation for the entrance of the eunuchs to the *'house and the walls of YHWH'* (56:5a).

In Isa. 56:3-7 the term ברית, according to Westermann, may have the meaning of "the precepts of YHWH's covenant", the "law" or Torah (1969, 313).

The promise made to the eunuchs is *'a monument and a name'* in YHWH's temple (בבית) that is better than children. This is a striking promise in view of the constant assurance of children as sign of salvation: Isa. 43:5-7, 44:3 (*I will pour my spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring*), 48:19 (*Your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me*), 54:13 (*All your children shall be taught by YHWH, and great shall be the prosperity of your children*).

They will have *'an everlasting name שם עולם that shall not be cut off לא יכרת'* (56:5b) even without descendants. W. Beuken has recognised that Isa. 56:5b reuses terms taken from 55:13 (*Instead of the thorn shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to YHWH for a memorial לשם, for an everlasting sign לא יכרת*) (1986, 48-64). However, the similarity lies only in the vocabulary. While YHWH promises an eternal

covenant (ברית עולם) in 55:3, 56:4, 6 specify that participation in YHWH's salvation involves the keeping of his covenant (ברית) by both eunuchs and foreigners (idem, 51).

56:7c takes up Isa. 2:2-3 ((2) *In days to come the mountain of YHWH's house בית-יהוה shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations כל-הגוים shall stream to it.* (3) *Many peoples shall come and say, 'God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths'. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem*), in the context of the prophetic announcement concerning the future establishment of Zion as the locus for YHWH's world rule (Sweeney, 1988, 138).

56:8 justifies the statement made in v. 7c (*my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples*). The house of YHWH will be a house of prayer for all nations because YHWH “who *gathers the outcasts of Israel* will bring others (hence presumably gentiles) to share in the worship of the temple” (Williamson, 1989, 150). This theme is also found in Isa. 60:7b and 66:23.

In Isa. 56:8a (*the outcasts of Israel*) the theme of the gathering of the dispersed Israel is mentioned in epigrammatic manner (cf. 66:7-9; 60:4b, 9b α ; 62:4-5; 11:12; 49:18-23; 54:1-3, 13).

b) Isaiah 56:9-57:21

In Isa. 56:9 the logical sequence is interrupted and the tone changes abruptly to indictment against the community's leaders (56:9-12) (Westermann, 1969, 317-318; Whybray, 1975, 200; Hanson, 1975, 187-188; Beuken, 1986, 59-60; Steck, (1987)1991b, 170). Beuken's correct supposition that the unity of Isa. 56:1-57:13a is determined by the fact that both Isa. 56:1-8 and 56:9-57:13a are commentaries on several

themes of Isaiah 55 (1986, 48-64) accounts for the present location of those passages and the anthological character of the whole passage.

The eschatology in Isaiah 56:9-57:21 deals with the intervention of YHWH to remove both the corrupt leaders accused in 56:9-57:1 and the idolaters accused in 57:3-13a (57:13b, 20-21), and to bring peace, an end to distress for his faithful people (57:16, 18, 19), and their due inheritance (57:13c). As Smith has noticed “56:9-12 contains only an indictment or reproach of the leaders of the people: there is no announcement of judgement until 57:14, which suggests that 56:9-12 should not be removed from the ensuing material” (1995, 68). Only in 57:13b (*the wind will carry them all off*) is their destiny decided where the eschatological intervention of YHWH to remove both is announced.

Isaiah 56:9-12

⁹ כל חיתו שדי אתיו לאכל כל-חיתו ביער:

¹⁰ צפו עורים כלם לא ידעו

כלם כלבים אלמים לא יוכלו לנבח

הזים שכבים אהבי לנום:

¹¹ והכלבים עזי-נפש לא ידעו שבעה

והמה רעים לא ידעו הבין

כלם לדרכם פנו איש לבצעו מקצהו:

¹² אתיו אקחה-יין ונסבאה שכר

והיה כזה יום מחר גדול יתר מאד:

(9) *All you beasts of the field, all you beasts in the forest, come to devour.*

(10) *His watchmen^a are blind, they are all without knowledge*

they are all dumb dogs that cannot bark;

dreaming^b sleeping, loving to slumber.

(11) *The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough (literally: they do not know satiety).*

The shepherds also (literally: and they are shepherds) have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each to his own unjust gain, on all sides.
 (12) *'Come', they say, 'let us take (literally: let me take) wine; let us fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow will be like this day, exceedingly great'.*

Textual notes:

(10)^a Reading the Kethib (צִפּוֹ *his watchman*) with 1QIsa^a (צִפּוּיָּו *his watchmen*).

^b Keeping the text חֲזִים *dreaming* and not emending according to 1QIsa^a (חֲזִים *seers*).

Although the leaders are described in 56:9-12 with words that seem to derive from Isa. 55:1-3 there is a contrast in context, content and language. The comparisons are as follows:

(1) *Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come,*

buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

(2) *Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy?*

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

(3) *Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.*

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

Both Isa. 56:9-57:13a and 55:1-3 open with an invitation, 'come' (אָתִיו, לָכוּ) (56:9; 55:1, 3) which functions in different ways. In 55:1-3 the invitation (*come, buy and eat, come, buy wine and honey, delight yourselves*), is emphatically directed to the needy, 'every one who thirsts' those 'that have no money....without money and without price' (55:1), to join the new covenant community, announcing YHWH's decision to guarantee security and salvation (*incline your ear and come to me; listen so that you may live*) (Watts, 1987, 246). In Isa. 56:9 the invitation is directed to 'all the beasts of the field...in the forest' which could come and feed themselves without any

danger of being deterred by the leaders since they are drunk, careless, and self-interested.

Isa. 56:9-12 contains accusations. Those charged are the watchmen **צפִּים** (56:10-11a) (either prophets⁶ or priests and prophets⁷) and shepherds **רעים** (56:11b-12), the political leaders of the community. Political and religious leaders [not only the priests, much less the Zadokites (Hanson's view)] are attacked.

The watchmen are '*blind, without knowledge, dumb, lying down dreaming, and loving to slumber*' (56:10). They are in contrast to the watchmen **צפִּים** who '*raise their voice, sing for joy*', '*because in plain sight they see the return of YHWH to Zion*' (Isa. 52:8). In Isa. 56:10b and 11a two more metaphors are used to describe the watchmen: *they are all dumb dogs that cannot bark, and the dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough* (literally: *they do not know satiety*). The vividness of the imagery serves as an attempt to startle the leaders into a recognition of their neglecting the people in their care. It is this task which they have failed to perform, so that the righteous continue to perish (57:1-2), and the idolaters continue to practise their illicit cults (Smith, 1995, 75-76). Isa. 56:9-57:21 warns certain elements within the community of the consequences of their present behaviour in the light of YHWH's approach.

The accusations against the corrupt leaders and various cultic acts are general and this polemic is found throughout the prophetic corpus. As Hanson has stated "Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Ezra all" faced "the problems of corrupt leaders and defiled cults similar to those depicted in this oracle" (1975, 194).

There are thematic connections with the wisdom tradition:

a) The attack upon laziness (56:10: *his watchmen...dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber*) occurs in Prov. 10:26 (*like vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes,*

⁶ Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, p. 246.

⁷ Hanson, *Dawn*, 1975, 196; Whybray, *Isaiah 40-66* (NCBC 1975), 200.

so are the lazy to their employers). The theme of the sleeping watchmen implying irresponsible leadership is unique in the whole book of Isaiah.

b) The attack upon drunken leaders (56:12: *Come אָתִּי, let us take wine יַיִן; let us fill ourselves with strong drink שָׂכָר*) is found in Prov. 31:4 (*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine יַיִן, or for rulers to desire strong drink שָׂכָר*).⁸³

Beuken has noticed the resemblance between Isa. 56:12 and Isa. 5:11 (*Ah, you who rise early in the morning in pursuit of strong drink שָׂכָר, who linger in the evening to be inflamed by wine יַיִן*) which is part of an indictment against the ruling classes in Jerusalem expressed in six “woe” speeches, 5:8-24 (Clements, 1980, 60-66). The resemblance is found in the pair of words ‘strong drink/wine’ (יַיִן / שָׂכָר) (Beuken, 1986, 61-62). In 5:11 one drinks from ‘early in the morning’ till ‘late in the evening’; in 56:12 from ‘this day’ till ‘tomorrow’. According to Beuken, “these adjuncts of time are not exactly similar: in 5:11 one counts in parts of the day, in 56:12 in whole days” (1986, 62).

Isa. 5:22-23 is also related to the theme of the drinking-bouts: *Ah, you who are heroes in drinking wine יַיִן and valiant at mixing drink שָׂכָר, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of their rights*. The accusation here suggests that the leaders of Jerusalem did not lack courage when they spoke up in their banquets (v. 22), but were not disposed to display moral courage when defended justice (Clements, 1980, 65).

c) The attack upon the getting of ‘unjust gain’ (Isa. 56:11cβ: *they have all turned...each to his own unjust gain בָּצַע*) is found in Prov. 1:19 (*Such is the end of all who are greedy for gain כָּל-בָּצַע בָּצַע; it takes away the life of its possessors*), and Prov. 15:27 (*Those who are greedy for unjust gain בָּצַע בֹּצְעִים make trouble for their households, but those who hate bribes will live*).

In the book of Isaiah this theme occurs in the following passages, though the vocabulary is different: i) Isa. 3:14 (*YHWH enters into judgement with the*

elders and princes of his people: It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the spoil גזלת of the poor is in your houses); ii) Isa. 5:8 (Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is no room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land); iii) Isa. 10:1-2 ((1) Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes, (2) to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right that the widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey).

In Isa. 56:11b the shepherds are described as ‘having no understanding’ and ‘having turned to their own way לדרכם פנו, to their own unjust gain לבצעו, on all sides’.

It has been stated (Westermann, 1969, 318; Beuken, 1986, 60; Koenen, 1990, 36) that Isa. 56:11b links up with Isa. 53:6a (All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way איש לדרכו פנינו, and YHWH has laid on him the iniquity of us all). However it has been recognised that each passage has a different meaning. In Isa. 53:6 the speakers compare themselves to sheep, and having regarded the Servant as one smitten by God (53:2-5) now confess that they themselves had gone astray and had been intent only on ‘their own way’ (53:6a), whereas the despised sufferer took their iniquity upon himself (53:6b), and so procured healing and peace for them (Westermann, 1969, 263-264). In 56:11 the leaders of Israel are compared to shepherds and they are accused of ‘turning to their own way’ (56:11c α), namely they turn away from right as established by either YHWH or society (Watts, 1987, 257). This idea is filled in 56:11c β : to their own unjust gain.

Isaiah 57:1-2

י הצדיק אבד ואין איש שם על-לב
ואנשי-חסד נאספים באין מבין
כי-מפני הרעה נאסף הצדיק:

יבוא שלום²

ינוחו על-משכבותם הלך נכחו:

- (1) (a) *The righteous perish* (literally: *the righteous one perishes*) *but no one takes it to heart,*
 (b) *and the men of piety are taken away but no one understands.*
 (c) *Indeed the righteous are* (literally: *is*) *taken away from the evil.*
 (2) *Peace will come (only for them); those who walk uprightly will rest on their beds.*

There is no unanimity among the scholars on the issue of the relationship between Isa. 56:9-12 and 57:1-2. Westermann (1969, 319), Whybray (1975, 200) and Koenen (1990, 15, 21) have stated that 57:1-2 is “an independent unit”, “a gloss”, or “a redactional addition” respectively. On the contrary, Hanson has argued that 57:1-2 is firmly related to 56:9-12, because of the “contrast drawn between the wanton leaders and the righteous men who suffer because of their neglect” (1975, 186-187; cf. Beuken, 1986, 63; Steck, (1987)1991b, 171; Sekine, 104, 111).

Koenen separates 57:1-2 from 56:9-12 on the basis that 57:1-2 portrays the fate of the righteous in general wisdom style, and that 56:9-12 criticizes the watchmen and shepherds, but does not refer to their bloodthirstiness (1990, 15-16, n. 2). However there are connections with the wisdom tradition elsewhere in 56:9-57:2: a) the word **בצע** ‘*unjust gain*’ (56:11) is associated with the wisdom tradition (Prov. 1:19; 15:27; 28:16) [Smith’s citation of Job 6:9 and 27:8 as places of reference of the substantive **בצע** is not right (1995, 73)]; b) the attacks upon drunken leaders (Isa. 56:12; Prov. 31:4; and c) the accusations of laziness (Isa. 56:10; Prov. 10:26). According to Smith, the lack of reference to the bloodthirstiness of the leaders is irrelevant, since they are not accused of killing the righteous, but simply of overlooking their demise (1995, 73). In my view, the chaotic situation where the persecution of “faithful and law-abiding people is tolerated or ignored” (Watts, 1987, 255), described in 57:1-2, and the idolaters’ continuance to practise their illicit cults

(57:3-13a) is to be seen as the immediate consequence of the failure of leadership in 56:9-12. A twofold contrast is created in 56:9-57:13a:

a) By means of the repetition of the root **שכב** the first contrast is created between the leaders and the righteous in 56:9-57:1-2. While the leaders presently dream and sleep (**שכב**: 56:10), the righteous are promised that they will have peace and rest in the future (57:2, **משכב**: *bed/grave*). The word **משכב** has the meaning of 'bed' and 'grave' (cf. Ezek. 32:25; 2 Chron. 16:14) (Briggs, Driver, Brown, 1950, 1012, note 1; cf. Scullion, 1973, 109).

b) 57:1-2 and 13bc, the framework within which 57:3-13a is set, give a hint of a second contrast between the righteous and the idolaters. By means of the same root **שכב** the righteous (resting on their beds/graves **משכב** (57:2)) and idolaters (having set their **משכב** (57:7) for their illicit practices) are contrasted (cf. Smith, 1995, 77). In contrast to the righteous who rest in their grave (57:2), the idolaters continue their chthonic rites and practices (cult of the dead intertwined with sexual fertility ritual, and child sacrifice) (57:3-13a). The destiny awaiting righteous⁸ and wicked (57:13b: *them all*, 20-21: *the wicked*, that is, both corrupt leaders and idolaters⁹) is also contrasted (57:13bc-21).

The play on the root **שכב** and the dualism in 56:9-57:2 (based on ethical grounds) and the one in 57:2-21 (based on cultic grounds) reflect the influence of mantological-wisdom exegesis.

The result of the negligent leadership is the death of the righteous (57:1a: *the righteous one perishes, but no one takes to heart*, 57:1b: *the men of piety are taken away but no one understands*). According to Hanson (1975, 197) and Beuken (1990, 69-70) the language is reminiscent of the suffering servant. Like him they are 'taken away' (57:1b: **נאספים**; cf. 53:8: *By a perversion of justice he*

⁸ 57:1: *the righteous, the men of piety*, 2: *those who walk uprightly*; 13c: *those who take refuge in YHWH*; 15: *the contrite and humble in spirit*, 18: *the mourners*.

⁹ 57:3: *sons of a conjurer, offspring of an adulterer*; v.4: *children of transgression, offspring of deceit*; v.17: *apostate*.

was taken away לִקַּח...), and end up in a *bed/grave* (57:2: מִשְׁכָּב; cf. 53:9: *they made his death* קִבֵּר *with the wicked*); they receive healing (57:18, 19b β : רָפָא; cf. 53:5: *by his bruises we are healed* נִפְרָא) and peace (57:2, 19b α) (cf. Smith, 1995, 71-72, 77-78). The learned preoccupation in 56:9-57:2 with an older prophecy, that is, Isa. 52:13-53:12 provides evidence of a mantological exegesis.

It is debated whether 57:1c-2 refer to a violent or a peaceful fate for the righteous. The words ‘*peace*’ שָׁלוֹם and ‘*bed*’ מִשְׁכָּב are taken as a reference to death (BDB, 1023, 1012; Westermann, 1969, 319; Hanson, 1975, 192, 197).

In the light of the similar optimistic promise given by YHWH in v. 13c (*he who takes refuge in me shall inherit the land and shall have possession of my holy mountain*; cf. their receiving of ‘*healing*’, ‘*rest*’ and ‘*comfort*’ in v. 18, and the reference to ‘*peace*’ in v. 19), v. 2 promises to the righteous that peace will come for them and their death will be a release from the dismal conditions of life (cf. Koenen, 1990, 17-20; Smith, 1995, 76, n. 37; in contrast to the fate of the wicked where there is no peace for them in 57:20-21). According to Koenen, שָׁלוֹם is the subject of the verb יָבוֹא. “The righteous do not go down בְּשָׁלוֹם ‘*in peace*’ (cf. Hanson, 1975, 192; Lewis, 1989, 144), because their deaths seem to be premature, untimely, and possibly violent” (Smith, 1995, 76, n. 37).

The learned preoccupation with older prophecy mentioned above is a ground for arguing that in this section there is the use of mantological exegesis.

The ethical dualism and the idea that the death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life, a theme found in Wisd. Sol. 4:7-17¹⁰ and

¹⁰ (7) *But the righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.* (10) *There were some who pleased God and were loved by him, and while living among sinners were taken up.* (11) *They were caught up so that evil might not change their understanding or guile deceive their souls.* (14) *for their souls were pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness* (cf. Job 3:13-19) (cf. Muilenburg, *Isaiah 40-66*, 1956, 664).

3:1-3¹¹ are the criteria for the presence of sapiential material in this section.

Isaiah 57:3

וַאֲתֵם קַרְבּוֹ-הֵנָּה בְּנֵי עַנְנָה

זֶרַע מִנְאֵף וְתִזְנֶה:

But you, come here, you sons of a conjurer,

offspring of an adulterer and of her who commits fornication^a.

Textual notes:

^a Emending the text (וְתִזְנֶה *and she plays the whore*) with LXX לִזְנֶה.

The majority of commentators have understood the forms of idolatry, attacked in 57:3-13a as corresponding in general to the Canaanite practices, particularly fertility rites, which had previously been condemned by the pre-exilic prophets (Muilenburg, 1956, 665-667; Westermann, 1969, 321-322, 324-325; Whybray, 1975, 202). Hanson understands the words of accusation as metaphorical made by the visionary party against “the defiled normative party”, that is “the priestly group” (1975, 197-200).

It is likely, however, that 57:3-13a is an attack upon an idolatrous group within the community. Recent works have recognized that the cult activities condemned in these verses are part of the cult of the dead as attested in Ugaritic texts intertwined with fertility rites (predominantly sexual images) and child sacrifice (Lewis, 1989, 143-158; cf. Irwin, 1967, 31-40; Kennedy, 1989, 47-52; Ackerman, 1990, 38-44).

The idolaters are called בְּנֵי עַנְנָה (translated by NRSV as ‘sons of a sorceress’) and זֶרַע מִנְאֵף (translated by NRSV as ‘offspring of an adulterer’). According to

¹¹ (1) *But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them.* (2) *In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster,* (3) *and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace.*

Westermann, these accusations are “well-known from the pages of pre-exilic prophecy: sorcery (Isa. 2:6; Micah 5:11; Jer. 27:9; in all cases the same word עֲנַן is used) and whoredom (often in Hosea and Jeremiah), probably with the transferred meaning of idolatry” (1969, 321-322). Whybray, at the same time, maintains that there is no reason to suppose that 57:3-13a is not post-exilic. It is clear from its inclusion (v. 13bc, where the idolaters are contrasted with those who are faithful to YHWH) in this unit that it had a relevance to the situation in post-exilic Judah (Whybray, 1975, 202).

According to Lewis the etymology of the root עֲנַן which has been translated as ‘to practise soothsaying’ means ‘to cause to appear’ and it is used to describe a type of divination involving the raising of spirits or apparitions [cf. Deut. 18:10-11 and 2 Kings 21:6(=2 Chr. 33:6) where the word מַעֲנֵן is used in close connection with those who consult the dead] (1989, 146-147; cf. Koehler-Baumgartner, 1953, 721).

In 57:3 there is an organic unity between the cult of the dead and sexual fertility rites, as it is obvious from the expressions ‘sons of a conjurer’ and ‘offspring of an adulterer and of her who commits fornication’ respectively.

The metaphor of Israel as the unfaithful harlot occurs elsewhere in the book of Isaiah in Isa. 1:21: *How the faithful city has become a whore לְזֹנוֹהָ! She that was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her - but now murderess!* “The city’s unrighteous way of life is pictured as moral infidelity, i.e. playing the harlot” (Clements, 1980, 35). The passage is part of Isa. 1:21-28, a condemnation of the political leaders and officials in Jerusalem, who are responsible for the unhealthy state of the moral, social and political life of the city (cf. Hos. 1 and 3; Jer. 2:1ff., 20ff.; 3:6-10; Ezek. 16 and 23).

Isaiah 57:4

עַל־מִי תִתְעַנֵּנוּ

עַל־מִי תִרְחִיבוּ פֶה תֹאדְרִיכוּ לִשׁוֹן

הַלֹּא־אַתֶּם יִלְדֵי־פֶשַׁע זֶרַע שִׁקָּר:

Whom are you making sport of?

Against whom do you open your mouth wide and stretch out (prolong) the tongue?

Are you not children of transgression, the offspring of deceit?

The reproaches are repeated in pointed terms.

The expression ילדי־פשע *'children of transgression'* picks up from Isa. 1:2: *Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth; for YHWH has spoken: I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me* פשעו בי. Isa. 1:2-3 is a speech by YHWH against Israel. V.2, which serves as an accusation, describes the negative reaction of the sons, who, instead of showing gratitude to their father's care, rebelled against YHWH (Sweeney, 1988, 102).

Isaiah 57:5

הנחמים באלים תחת כל־עץ רענן

שחטי הילדים בנחלים תחת סעפי הסלעים:

you who burn with lust among oaks, under every green tree,

who slaughter children in the wadis, under the clefts of the rocks?

The idolatrous practices are now described in detail. The sexual imagery which first appeared in verse 3 (*offspring of an adulterer and of her who commits fornication*), is expanded in verse 5a. The fertility rituals involved sexual activity which was taking place under sacred trees (cf. Deut. 12:2; 1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 16:4(= 2 Chron. 28:4), 17:10; Jer. 2:20, 3:6, 13, 17:2; Ezek. 6:13) or in sacred groves (cf. Isa. 1:29-30; Hos. 4:12-13; Ezek. 20:28) (Ackerman, 1990, 38).

The worship is apparently accompanied by the sacrifice of children (v. 5b) in the cult of Molek, a cult closely associated with the cult of the dead (Ackerman, 1990, 40; cf. Heider, 1985, 383-400).

Isaiah 57:6

בחלקי־נחל חלקך הם הם גורלך

גמ־להם שפכת נסך העלית מנחה

העל אלה אנחם:

*Among the dead of the wady is your portion; they, they, are your lot;
even to them you have poured out a drink-offering, you have brought a grain
offering.*

Shall I be comforted on account of these things?

The expression בחלקי־נחל חלקך has been translated ‘among the smooth (stones) of the wady is your portion’ (RSV, NRSV), based on the meaning of the Hebrew root חלק ‘to be smooth’. However, W.H. Irwin, using data from the mythological texts from Ugarit (the adjective *hlq* appearing in parallelism with the adjective *mt* ‘dead’), proposed a second meaning for the root *hlq*, that is, ‘to die, to perish’. Therefore, the translation of the expression in 57:6a is ‘Among the dead of the wady is your portion’ (1967, 31-33; cf. Lewis, 1989, 147-149; C.H. Kennedy, 1989, 48-49; Ackerman, 1990, 41-42).

The word-play between the rare form חלק ‘to die, to perish’ and חלק ‘portion’ makes the grounds for a mantological influence strong (cf. Fishbane’s discussion on paranomastic exegesis and puns in his *Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 451, 454-455, 464-465).

The idolaters are condemned for offering sacrifices to the dead (57:6b: *even to them you have poured out a drink-offering, you have brought a grain offering*).

Isaiah 57:7-8

⁷ על־הר־גבה ונשא שמת משכבך

גם־שם עלית לזבח זבח:

⁸ ואחר הדלת והמזוזה שמת זכרוןך

כי מאתי גלית ותעלי הרחבת משכבך

ותכרת־לך מהם אהבת משכבם יד חזית:

(7) *Upon a lofty and high mountain you have set your grave,
even there you went up to offer sacrifice.*

(8) (a) *Behind the door and the doorpost you have set your memorial stela;*

(b) *Because, deserting me, you uncovered your bed, you went up (to it) and you made it wide.*

(c) *Though you cut yourself off^a from them (the dead), you loved their grave, you (Jerusalem) have gazed on the memorial stela.*

Textual notes:

(8) ^a Reading ותכרת-לך (though you (masc.) cut yourself off) with 1QIsa^a ותכרותי-לכה (though you (femin.) cut yourself off).

Vv. 7-11 intertwine both death cult and sexual (fertility rite) imagery through word-plays.

The references in vv. 7-8 are to practices associated with the cult of the dead, such as necromancy (vv. 7, 8a, 8c), and possibly, given the location on mount Zion, to the cult of dead kings (Ezek. 43:6-9) (cf. Lewis, 1989, 150-151), interwoven with fertility rites (v. 8b).

The word for the 'bed' משכב which the harlot Jerusalem sets (v. 7) also means 'grave', 'resting place', or 'place of copulation' (cf. 57:2; Ezek. 32:25; 2 Chron. 16:14). Likewise, the words זכרון and יד (v. 8) can be understood as 'phallic symbol, male' and as 'memorial stela, monument' erected when someone dies, whether in worship of dead kings or of family ancestors (Lewis, 1989, 149-150; Ackerman, 1990, 39, 42; cf. M. Delcor, 1967, 230-240).

According to Lewis, the expression ותכרת-לך מהם (literally: *you have cut yourself off from them*) may refer to the making of the covenant with the dead ancestors in the light of Isa. 28:15, 18: (15) *Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an agreement כרתנו ברית את-מות ועם-שאול עשינו חזה when the overwhelming scourge passes through it will not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter"; (18) Then your covenant with death בריתכם את-מות will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol וחזותכם את-שאול will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through you*

will be beaten down by it, both of these passages depicting participation in cults of the dead (Lewis, 1989, 134-135). However, the translation of 57:8 ‘*you made for you [a covenant with] them* וְתִכְרַתְּ לָךְ [בְּרִית עִם] מָהֶם’ is hardly possible, because the omission of an important word such as the word בְּרִית is rather doubtful. If the verse is read in its basic meaning (*though you cut yourself off from them* (the dead)) it makes good sense with the rest of the verse (*you loved their grave, you have gazed on the memorial stela*). Though the dead with their death have been separated from the world of the living ones, the idolaters with their necromancy still believe that the dead can affect their lives and seek oracles and secrets from the dead.

Isaiah 57:9

וְתִשְׁרִי לְמֶלֶךְ בַּשֶּׁמֶן וְתִרְבִּי רִקְחִיךְ
וְתִשְׁלַחִי צְרִיךְ עַד־מֶרְחָק וְתִשְׁפִּילִי עַד־שְׂאוּל:

*You journeyed to Molech with oil (i.e. you brought it, offered it),
you multiplied your perfumes.*

You sent your envoys far away, you sent (them) down even to Sheol.

NRSV translates the word מֶלֶךְ as ‘Molech’. This word is found in several other passages in the Old Testament with reference to child sacrifice (Lev. 18:21, 20:2-5; 2Kings 23:10; Jer. 32:35). In the past, commentators identified Molek as a foreign god (the god of Amorites, Milkom, or the Canaanite god Melek) to whom idolatrous worshippers in Israel and Judah offered their children in sacrifice (cf. Westermann, 1969, 324; Whybray, 1975, 205). Ackerman, influenced by O. Eissfeldt, suggested that the Phoenician and Punic word ‘*mulk*’, which means ‘*sacrificial offering of a child*’, is cognate with the Hebrew מֶלֶךְ ‘*molek*’. Thus, according to Ackerman the sacrificial offering referred to in Isa. 57:9 is of a human child (1990, 40). An alternative suggested by Lewis would be to see “a word-play referring not merely to the harlot’s perfume but to the anointing of the dead king and/or his funerary stela (cf. the collocation of harlotry (זְנוּת) and a royal death cult ritual (פְּגֵרִי מַלְכִּיהֶם) in Ezekiel 43:7-9” (1989, 150-151).

Lewis' alternative is not attractive because how could there have been a post-exilic 'real' cult of anointing a dead king?

In verse 9b the people are accused of participating in yet another idolatrous activity. 'Sheol' is the underworld. The people (Jerusalem) is condemned for necromancy. "They are sending magicians to seek out some spirit of the dead", trying "to learn from that spirit special, but illicit, knowledge" (cf. 1 Samuel 28:11-14) (Ackerman, 1990, 41; cf. Lewis, 1989, 151). The references to journeying and sending ambassadors to Sheol are explicit evidence of a cult of the dead and associated practices as necromancy (Whybray, 1975, 206) and are not "a hyperbolic restatement of the previous colon to emphasize the extremes to which the whole Israel is willing to go to please the foreign sovereign" as Hanson believes (1975, 200). Hanson keeps the word מֶלֶךְ 'king', according to MT, and takes it as a reference to the Persian Emperor and to the diplomatic activity going on between Jerusalem (the defiled hierocratic party of Israel) and Persia for the building of the Temple (ibidem).

Isaiah 57:10

בִּרְבַּךְ דֶּרֶכְךָ יִגְעַת לֹא אָמַרְתָּ נוֹאֵשׁ

חַיִּית יֶדֶךָ מִצָּאָתָּה עַל־כֵּן לֹא חֲלִיתָ:

You wearied yourself because of the length of your (ways) journeys, but you did not say, "It is hopeless".

You found the revival for your strength, and so you did not weaken.

This verse describes the insistence of the idolaters on practising their rites in spite of their ineffectiveness.

The term יִגְעַת 'you wearied yourself' is addressed to Jerusalem and probably is taken up from Isa. 47:12: *Stand fast in your enchantments and your many sorceries* וּבִרְבַּךְ כַּשְׁפֶּיךָ, *with which you have laboured* יִגְעַת *from your youth; perhaps you may be able to succeed, perhaps you may inspire terror, where conquered* Babylon is addressed sarcastically and she is taunted that sorceries and enchantment 'with which she has laboured' cannot save her (Watts, 1987,

171-172). In the same context Isa. 47:15 is found: *Such to you are those with whom you have laboured יגעת, who have trafficked with you from your youth; they all wander about in their own paths; there is no one to save you.*

The meaning of the phrase חית ירך מצאת 'you found revival for your hand/phallus' (BDB, 312, I. חיה, n. 4: *you found renewal for your strength*; cf. Lewis, 1989, 157; Ackerman, 1990, 40) is unknown. P.R. Ackroyd takes it as a reference to "power as virility" and considers the meaning 'phallus' for יר a possible extension of יד 'power, vitality' (*Theological Dictionary of the O.T.*, 1986, pp. 402-403).

Isaiah 57:11

ואת־מי דאגת ותיראי כי תכזבי
ואותי לא זכרת לא־שמת על־לבך
הלא אני מחשה ומעלם ואותי לא תיראי:

*But whom did you dread and fear, that you told lies,
and did not remember me, or give (me) a thought?*

Have I not kept silent and for a long time, and so you did not fear me?

Israel is confronted with "the glaring contrast involved in her conduct" in the way early prophets do, "saying so much in so little compass". Jeremiah 2, comparing the foreign gods with broken cisterns which, after all, fail to supply water, is an example of that language (Westermann, 1969, 324).

The same kind of question, used here in Isa. 57:11a, *ואת־מי דאגת ותיראי* 'whom did you dread and fear' is found also in Isa. 50:10: *Who among you fears YHWH יְהוָה מי בכם ירא יְהוָה and obeys the voice of his servant, who walks in darkness and has no light, yet trusts in the name of YHWH and relies upon his God?*, where the people addressed are those who 'walk in darkness' because as yet they do not know the light of salvation; the proof of 'fear of God' is obedience to the word of the Servant (Westermann, 1969, 234).

In the past commentators pointed out that the question in Isa. 57:11a may mean that the people of Jerusalem feared the foreign gods instead of the true God as it is stated at the end of verse 11 *'and so you did not fear me'*, *'dread and fear'*, namely the awe, "being basic to worship and to faith" (Watts, 1987, 259; Westermann, 1969, 324). Lewis, setting this verse also in the context of the cult of the dead, suggests that it is the shades of the dead whom they do not dread and fear.

The accusation *וְאֹתִי לֹא זָכַרְתָּ* *'you did not remember me'* is found also in Isa. 17:10 (context of polemic against idolatry): *For you have forgotten the God of your salvation, and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge וְיִצְוֹר מֵעֹז לֹא זָכַרְתָּ; therefore, though you plant pleasant plants and set out slips of an alien god, which, elaborating further upon the theme of idolatry mentioned in Isa. 17:7-8, refers to the planting of cuttings of plants in specially prepared gardens in order to induce them to grow rapidly. "In Hellenistic times such a practice was associated with the god Adonis, but the origin goes much further back both in Canaan and Mesopotamia. It was a form of private ritual which was believed to bring life and fertility to the participants" (Clements, 1980, 160).*

Isa. 57:11c, continuing the exemplifications of the turn of Jerusalem to idolatrous practices and asking *'Have I not kept silent and for a long time מַחֲשָׁה וּמַעַלְלָה and so you do not fear me'*, adapts Isa. 42:14a: (a) *For a long time I have held my peace הִחֲשִׁיתִי מֵעוֹלָם, I have kept still and restrained myself;* (b) *now I will cry out like a woman in labour, I will gasp and pant.* This passage refers not merely to God's silence but also to his inaction, which he himself admits. In verse 16 however, YHWH promises drastic action against Babylonians and proclaims the people's return home (Westermann, 1969, 105-106; Whybray, 1975, 78).

Isaiah 57:12-13abc

¹² אֲנִי אֶגִּיד צְדָקָתְךָ וְאֶת־מַעֲשֶׂיךָ

ולא יועילוך:

בזעקך יצילך קבוציך^{13a}

וּאֶת־כָּל־יִשְׂא־רוּחַ יִקַּח־חֶבֶל^b

וְהַחוּסָה בִּי יִנְחַל־אֶרֶץ וַיִּירַשׁ הָר־קֹדֶשׁ:^c

(12) *I will declare your righteousness and your works,
but they will not help you.*

(13a) *When you cry out, let your gathered ones (dead)^a deliver you.*

(b) *But the wind will carry them all off, a breath will take (them) away.*

(c) *But he who takes refuge in me shall inherit the land and shall have
possession of my holy mountain.*

Textual Notes:

(13a) ^a Interpreting קבוציך with the suggestion made by Lewis that the word קבוץ is equivalent to the Ugaritic root *qbs* (*qabusi: the gathered ones*) which is used in the sense of “joining one’s ancestors in the underworld” (Lewis, 1989, 151-152).

The intention in v. 12 is sarcastic and ironical. The verse builds the closure of the judgement speech by YHWH which started in 57:3 and whose main theme is the syncretistic practices in which the idolaters have been engaged. It is to be expected that, at the end of this judgement speech (vv. 12-13ab), the weakness of these practices, when YHWH intervenes, is stressed. These false acts of cult were supposed to be a sign of the idolaters’ righteousness (in ethical sense). V. 12, in this way functions as a threat to the idolaters, a threat continued and elucidated in v. 13ab.

The theme of the weakness of the idolatry (57:12: לא יועילוך ‘*they will not help you*’) occurs in the book of Isaiah in the following passages:

a) Isa. 44:9: *All who make idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit בל־יועילו; their witnesses neither see nor know. And so they will be put to shame,* and Isa. 44:10: *Who would fashion a god or cast an image that can do no good לבלתי הועיל,* which are part of 44:9-20, a general verdict passed

on the manufacturers and worshippers of idols, to show the unhelpfulness of these idols (cf. 47:14, 15).

b) Isa. 47:12: *Stand fast in your enchantments and your many sorceries, with which you have laboured from your youth; perhaps you may be able to succeed* אולי תוכלי הועיל, *perhaps you may inspire terror, which mockingly encourages Babylon to believe that her magical practices will be able to save her from her fate.* Isa. 57:12 stresses that the kind of idolatrous rites that the idolaters practise are unprofitable.

The theme of the polemic against idolatrous cultic activity is found in the book of Isaiah also in the following passages: Isa. 1:29-31; 2:6-9; 17:10; 40:19-20; 41:6-7; 42:17; 45:16; 46:1, 5-6.

57:13ab suggests that equally useless will be the idolaters' attempts to appeal (*cry out*) to their קבוצים for help.

NRSV has translated the word קבוץ 'gathered ones or collection' as 'your collection of idols'. According to Lewis the word קבוץ is equivalent to the Ugaritic word *qbs*. Lewis found that in the Ugaritic Funerary Text the expression *qbs ddn* (*qabusi 'the gathered ones' of the Didanu tribe*) is parallel to *rp' 'ars* (*the heroes (Rephaim) of the underworld*). In view of the death imagery in vv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 the 'gathered ones' refer to the dead ancestors (1989, 151-152; cf. Ackerman, 1990, 41).

V. 13b 'But the wind will carry them all כלם off' creates an antithesis with 13c 'But he who takes refuge in me'. Viewed syntactically *them all* (כלם) refers back to קבוציך (v. 13a) but in this explanation a contrast arises in vv. 13b-c between the 'dead' and 'he who takes refuge in me'. A contrast between the idolaters and the faithful is more probable (cf. Beuken, 1986, 52-53; Smith, 1995, 87). 'Them all' (v. 13b) refers to the wicked, that is, both the corrupt leaders (56:9-12) and the idolaters (57:3-13a).

In Isa. 57:13bc-21 YHWH will intervene to remove both the idolaters and the corrupt leaders (57:13b, 20-21), by which action he will bring peace, an end to distress for his faithful people (57:18, 19), and their due

inheritance (57:13c) (cf. 65:8-16ab). This dualism based on ethical and cultic grounds reflects a wisdom influence.

According to Isa. 57:13c there is still time for the idolaters to abandon their idolatry and join YHWH's true worship (*But he who takes refuge in me shall inherit the land and shall have possession of my holy mountain* ויירש הר-קדש). (ויירש הר-קדש).

The theme of inheritance of land occurs in Isa. 49:8: *Thus says YHWH: In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages* להנחיל נחלות שממות. In this passage YHWH promises to “repopulate and restore the land of Palestine which has been left ‘desolate’ as a result of the Exile” (Whybray, 1975, 141). In 57:13c the inheritance of the land is promised not to the whole nation but to a faithful section in the community (cf. 58:12, 14; 65:9).

Isa. 57:13c also speaks of the right of the faithful within Israel to meet God in his sanctuary (*and shall have possession of my holy mountain* ויירש הר-קדש) (cf. 56:7 where the faithful foreigners will receive the same inheritance: *these I will bring to my holy mountain* הר-קדש).

Isaiah 57:14

ואמר

סל־סלו פנו־דרך הרימו מכשול מדרך עמי:

And he will say,

“cast up, cast up, make clear the way. Remove the obstruction from my people's way.

The expression פנו דרך ‘make clear the way’ is picked up from Isa. 40:3: *A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of YHWH יהוה פנו דרך, make straight in the desert a highway for our God”*, which reflects its exilic Babylonian background the ‘way’ being understood as a road built to convey the

returning exiles from Babylon to Palestine (Westermann, 1969, 33, 36-39).

Isa. 57:14 is more spiritual than 40:3 (Fishbane, 1985, 289, note 23). The 'way' which is to be prepared in Isa. 57:14 is a provision for the faithful in the community. It is not a question of a physical return to the homeland, but rather of the preparation of the community for its continued relationship with God (Westermann, 1969, 328; cf. Whybray, 1975, 209).

The word *מכשול* 'obstruction' is used in Ezek. 7:19; 14:3, 4, 7; 18:30; 44:12 in an ethical sense (of sin, especially idolatry) and it means 'stumbling block leading to iniquity' (Westermann, 1969, 328). In 57:14 the term serves to reinterpret in inner-community terms the message of the preparation of the way for the faithful. The 'obstruction' which has to be removed is the sin of the wicked.

Isaiah 57:15

כי כה אמר רם ונשא שכן עד וקדוש שמו
מרום וקדוש אשכון ואת־דכא ושפל־רוח
להחיות רוח שפלים ולהחיות לב נדכאים:

For thus says the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity and whose name is 'Holy One':

I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of contrite and humble spirit,

to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

There is an emphasis in 57:15 on YHWH's transcendence. The nature of YHWH's dwelling place which in Isa. 6:1¹² and 33:5¹³ was believed to be in heaven is reinterpreted in 57:15 by means of the addition 'and also with

¹² Isa. 6:1: *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw YHWH sitting on a throne, high and lofty* רם ונשא; *and the hem of his robe filled the temple.*

¹³ Isa. 33:5: *YHWH is exalted, he dwells on high* מרום שכן.

him who is of contrite and humble spirit' (cf. 66:1-2). YHWH's transcendency is embodied here in his care for the needy.

Isaiah 57:16

כי לא לעולם אריב ולא לנצח אקצוף
כי־רוח מלפני יעטוף ונשמות אני עשיתי:

*For I will not continually contend, nor will I be for ever angry,
because the spirit would faint before me and the breaths of life (souls,
synonym here of נפש) that I have made.*

V. 16 continues to expand on the contrast between the fate of the faithful and the idolaters made in v. 13bc by reassuring the faithful that they will not have to wait much longer before the promised intervention takes place. YHWH will not 'contend' forever.

Isaiah 57:17

בעון בצעו קצפתי ואכחו הסתר ואקצף
וילך שובב בדרך לבו:

*I was angry because of the iniquity of his gain made by violence, so that I smote
him, hiding (my face) when I was angry;
but he continued (walked) apostate in the way of his heart.*

Verse 17a explains YHWH's anger (a reference back to exile; cf. 60:10b) He was 'angry' because of Israel's 'iniquity' which consisted of violent acts for profit **בצע**, that is, plunder (BDB, 130) and he 'smote' them.

But v. 17b indicates that even after this they have persisted in going the 'way of their own heart' (דרך לבו). Thus, the leaders and idolaters are portrayed as continuing the kind of activity which caused the exile in the first place. In 56:11 the leaders are accused of 'turning to their own way' **לדרכם פנו** and 'to their own gain' **לבצעו**. Similarly, in 57:10, the idolaters have continued to go their own way (you wearied yourself because of the length

of your (ways) journeys (ברב דרכך). The leaders are negligent, lazy, drunk (56:9-12), and incompetent to enforce social justice so that the righteous continue to perish (57:1), and the idolaters, engaged in their illicit practices, have forgotten their responsibilities to YHWH (57:3-13a).

Thus, v. 17b gives an explanation for YHWH's judgement on the leaders and the idolaters announced in v. 13b (*the wind will carry them all off, a breath will take (them) away*).

Isaiah 57:18-19

דרכיו ראיתי¹⁸

וארפאהו ואנחהו ואשלם נחמים לו

ולאבליו:

בורא נוב שפתים¹⁹

שלום שלום לרחוק ולקרוב אמר יחיה ורפאתיו:

(18) *I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; and I will lead him and requite him and his mourners with comfort.*

(19a) *creating the fruit^a of the lips.*

b) *Peace, Peace, to the distant (far) and the near, says YHWH, and I will heal him.*

Textual Notes:

(19) ^a Reading (Qere construct נִיב *fruit* supported by 1QIsa^a) the Kethib (נוב *fruit*).

Vv. 18-19 turn to the reassurance of the faithful people and their future condition following the removal of the leaders and the idolaters.

The expression '*and I will requite him and his mourners with comfort*' וְאֶבְלִיּוֹ alludes to Isa. 40:1: *Comfort, O comfort my people* נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי, *says your God*, which is a word of comfort spoken to YHWH's people (*my people*). It is evident from the following chapters that they are

the exiles in Babylon. However, Isa. 57:18b, speaks of ‘*comforting*’ the righteous.

The assurance ‘*Peace, Peace*’ שלום שלום, given by YHWH to the people, denotes relief after the oppression of the people by the leaders and idolaters.

The blessing is offered to those who are *distant* and to those who are *near*.

This expression seems to allude to Isa. 33:13: *Hear, you who are far away רחוקים, what I have done; and you who are near קרובים, acknowledge my might,* where ‘*far away*’ and ‘*near*’ “refer to the Babylonian exiles and the community in Judah respectively, as each having an interest in YHWH’s intended action” (Clements, 1980, 268).

While some commentators have suggested that the expression ‘*to the distant (far) and the near*’ in Isa. 57:19 refers to the Jews in Jerusalem and the Jews scattered throughout the world (Whybray, 1975, 211; cf. Watts, 1987, 263) it is more probable that the reference here is to the peace that comes to all righteous men, a peace that will soon be extended to all YHWH’s purified and faithful people (Polan, 1986, 158; Smith, 1995, 95).

Isaiah 57:20-21

²⁰ והרשעים כים נגרש כי השקט לא יוכל

ויגרשו מימיו רפש וטיט:

²¹ אין שלום אמר אלהי לרשעים:

(20) *But the wicked are like the tossing sea, that cannot rest, and whose waters toss up mire and mud.*

(21) *There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.*

57:20-21 contains a statement of the destiny of the wicked: they will not find peace when YHWH intervenes (cf. 59:18-20; 63:1-6; 65:25; 66:24)

V. 21 alludes to Isa. 48:22: “*There is no peace*”, says YHWH, “*for the wicked*” אין שלום אמר יהוה לרשעים. Although it is regarded as a later addition (Westermann, 1969, 205; Whybray, 1975, 134) in its present context (48:20-21, where the exiles are told to leave Babylon and their redemption is proclaimed by YHWH), it is clear that there were some

within the covenant community who were deemed to ‘*confess the God of Israel, but not in truth or right*’ (Isa. 48:1).

1) The evidence of mantological exegesis in the first eschatological structural unit, Isa. 56:1-57:21, is the following:

a) Learned preoccupation with older prophecy:

- 56:1b (mantological exegesis of Isa. 46:13; 51:5-8): YHWH’s salvific intervention.
- 56:2: the criteria/conditions for participation of all mankind in salvation (ethical and religious conduct) (Isa. 56:2b β //Isa. 1:15-16).
- 56:3a, 6, 7ab (of Deut. 23:3-9): admission of foreigners (proselytes) into the worshipping community (cf. 66:21).
- 56:7c, 8 (of Isa. 2:2-3): all nations come to worship YHWH in the temple (cf. 60:7b; 66:23).
- 56:3b, 4, 5 (re-interpretation of Deut. 23:2 and Lev. 21:20): admission of eunuchs into the worshipping community.
- 56:9-12: denunciation of corrupt political and religious leaders (Isa. 56:9 of 55:1-3; 56:12 of 5:11 and 5:22-23; 56:11c β of 3:14, 5:8, 10:1-2; 56:11b of 53:6a).
- 57:1b (of Isa. 53:8): the result of negligent leadership is the demise of the righteous.
- 57:12 (of Isa. 44:9-20; 47:12, 14, 15; and of 1:29-31; 2:6-9; 40:19-20; 41:6-7; 42:17; 45:16; 46:1, 5-6): weakness of idolatry ~ reproach of those who practise idolatrous cultic activity.
- 57:13c (of 49:8): the theme of inheritance of the land (cf. 58:12, 14; 65:9).
- 57:14 α (of 40:3): the theme of *making clear the way*.
- 57:18b β .c (of 40:1): the theme of the receiving of comfort.
- 57:2, 19b α (of 33:13): the theme of the receiving of peace.
- 57:13b, 21 (48:22): destruction of wicked (leaders and idolaters).

b) Inner-textual exegesis in 56:2b of 56:1a β .

c) Play on words צדקה and שכב; double entendres: חלק, יד, זכרון.

2) Wisdom themes and vocabulary:

56:2a (the literary formula of a blessing: אשרי אנוש יעשה-זאת).

56:2b β (cf. 1:15-16: prayer): Reinterpretation of a cultic practice (sabbath) in terms of moral behaviour.

56:10: The attack upon laziness.

56:12: The attack upon drunken leaders.

56:11c β : The attack upon the getting of 'unjust gain'.

57:1c-2: Death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life.

57:13bc-21: Ethical dualism based on moral and cultic grounds: the removal of both idolaters and the corrupt leaders (57:13b; 20-21); the end of distress for YHWH's faithful people (57:18, 19: all righteous, *the distant and the near*) and their due inheritance (57:13c).

57:15: Reinterpretation of the nature of YHWH's dwelling place.

2. Isaiah 58:1-59:21

Isa. 58:1-59:21 contains an indictment against the people for their sins (ethical and ritual) in the light of YHWH's intervention. The eschatological destruction of the wicked and the salvation of the righteous (59:15b-20) is one of the grounds for arguing that this unit has used sapiential material, and the re-use of older material is evidence of mantological exegesis.

a) Isaiah 58:1-14

Isaiah 58:1

קרא בגרון אל־תחשך כשופר הרם קולך
והגד לעמי פשעם ולבית יעקב חטאתם:

Cry out aloud (literally: in a throat), do not refrain. Lift up your voice like a trumpet,

declare (announce) to my people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins.

Vv.1-2 form an introduction to Isa. 58:3-59:20 and give an account of the commission by YHWH to a person to proclaim judgement on Israel (Koenen, 1990, 88, 93; Steck, (1987)1991b, 178).

The imperative singular of the verb קרא 'cry out' begins the poem on a strong note of proclamation, to announce to Israel her sins.

This imperative is also found in Isa. 40:6: *A voice says, 'Cry out קרא' And I said, 'What shall I cry קרא?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field*, which is part of an account of the unnamed speaker's call and commission to be YHWH's spokesman, Isa. 40:1-11. In vv. 6-8 YHWH's spokesman is called to proclaim the purpose of YHWH which 'stands' over all the earthly power (especially the Babylonian empire). The 'crying' commanded in vv. 6ff. and the preparation of the way commanded in vv.

3ff. serve the same end, the comforting of the Jewish exiles with the news that the time of their suffering is at an end (v. 1)”. The tone in Isa. 58:1 is different. It brings an indictment against the people for their sins.

The exhortation *אל-תחשך* ‘do not refrain’ occurs in Isa. 54:2: *Enlarge the site of your tent, and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out; do not hold back אל-תחשכי*; *lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes*, which is part of Isa. 54:1-10, where Zion is addressed, though not specifically named, by YHWH, and she is given a promise of salvation. The situation in Isa. 58:1 is not a call for rejoicing but a call from YHWH to a person to ‘declare (announce) to His people their transgression, and to the house of Jacob their sins’.

The Hiphil Imperative of the verb *רום* combined with the word *קול* ‘to lift up voice’ occurs in the following passages: a) Isa. 13:2: *On a bare hill raise a signal, cry aloud קול הרימו to them; wave the hand for them to enter the gates of the nobles*, where there is a positive sense seeing in Babylon (*the nobles must be the Babylonian soldiers*, according to Clements; 1980, 133) a divinely given destiny to conquer Assyria.

b) Isa. 40:9: *Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice קולך הרימי with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up הרימי, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”*, where Zion/Jerusalem is addressed with a command to proclaim to the other cities of Judah the good news that YHWH has won a victory and He is going to bring the exiles to them (40:10-11). The same expression is used in a different context in 58:1-2.

Hanson sees in 58:1-12 a dichotomy within the nation between two groups, one which fasts falsely because it combines the fasting with oppression and violence (58:2-5) (the Zadokite priests) and another which would fast in a way pleasing to YHWH by acts of social justice (58:6-12) (the visionary disciples of Second Isaiah) (1975, 106-107, 110-113). However, on the basis of 58:1 (*my people...the house of Jacob*) it is the

community as a whole who is addressed and no division among the people is envisaged.

Isaiah 58:2

ואותי יום/יום ידרשון ודעת דרכי יחפצון
כגוי אשר צדקה עשה ומשפט אלהיו לא עזב
ישאלוני משפטי צדק קרבת אלהים יחפצון:

a) *And yet they seek me in prayer and worship day after day and delight to know my ways,*

b) *like a nation that does righteousness and does not forsake the ordinance (justice) of their God,*

c) *they ask of me righteous justice, they delight to draw near to God.*

V. 2 contains a general reference to the people's cultic activity (2aα: *they seek me in prayer and worship day after day*; 2cb: *they delight to draw near to God*) and their search for ethical (2aβ: *they delight to know my ways*; 2bα: *like a nation that does righteousness*) and ritual instruction (2cα: *they ask of me righteous justice*) in what will be pleasing to YHWH so that they can do it and he will manifest his saving presence to them.

Ironic overtones prevail in v. 2 as the pleasure the people find in their practices later becomes their condemnation in v. 3b. They superficially appear pious and God-fearing. Their pursuit of YHWH is, in fact, a pursuit of their own pleasure. In effect, the people do not 'know YHWH's ways', that is, there is a contrast between the ways of the people (what they understand to be justice and righteousness) and the ways of YHWH (the concept of justice and righteousness that He wants). The same theme, though expressed differently, occurs in the following passages:

a) Isa. 42:24: *Who gave up Jacob to the spoiler, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not YHWH, against whom we have sinned, in whose ways they would not walk לא־אבו בדרכיו הלוך, and whose law תורה they would not obey?*, which is part of "a disputation speech" as shown by the use of interrogative *who* (vv. 19a, b; 23; 24a) (Westermann, 1969, 109). The question in v. 24

establishes that YHWH was responsible for the present miserable state (the affliction by the Babylonians) of the blind, here unmistakably identified as Israel and Jacob, but that this display of YHWH's anger was the result of Israel's sin, her disregard of His commandments (*they did not walk in YHWH's ways and they did not obey to His law*) and not of YHWH's malevolence or indifference.

b) Isa. 55:8-9: (8) *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways* דרכיכם דרכי, *says YHWH* (9) *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways* דרכי דרכיכם *and my thoughts than your thoughts,* where the word דרך 'way' in the plural is used in ethical content (vv. 6-9).

A theological dualism (contrast between God and man, between the Creator and His creation) is expressed in vv. 8-9 (Gammie, 1974, 358).

Isa. 58:2-3a is a parenthetical description of the outward righteousness of the community, a people who lament that their practice of fasting is ineffectual and secures no response from YHWH, because they do not fulfil YHWH's will concerning the practising of justice and righteousness.

Verse 2b describes a righteous and just nation (אשר-צדקה עשה ומשפט אלהיו לא עזב) '*that does righteousness and does not forsake the ordinance of YHWH*') suggesting that the inauthentic pursuit of YHWH is rather a forsaking of YHWH. Despite their outward religious observances there is only apparent, not actual, commitment to righteous action and to obedience to YHWH's commandments. There is an indirect reference in v. 2b to the exhortation to right action, similar to the previous structural unit (56:1a). Koenen has pointed out that the expression צדקה 'do righteousness' occurs only in Isa. 56:1 and 58:2 in the Old Testament (1990, 13). In 58:6-14 the detailed implications of what it means to 'do righteousness צדקה and...justice משפט' in v. 2b are given.

Isaiah 58:3-4

³ למה צמנו ולא ראית ענינו נפשנו ולא תדע
 הן ביום צמכם תמצאו־חפץ וכל־עצביכם תנגשו:
⁴ הן לריב ומצה תצומו ולהכות באגרף רשע
 לא־תצומו כיום להשמיע במרום קולכם:

(3) *Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why do we humble ourselves, but you do not notice?*

Behold (look), you occupy yourself with your own business (literally: that in which you take delight) on your fast-day and oppress (literally: you drive to work) all your workers.

(4) *Behold (look) you fast for strife and contention and to strike with a wicked fist.*

Fasting like yours today will not make your voice be heard on high.

The main theme of Isa. 58:1-12, fasting, is now introduced in v.3. The fasting is a specific example of the people's attempts to put into practice what they understand to be YHWH's wishes.

In v. 3a the people (*the house of Jacob*) question YHWH as to why He is lacking in a knowledge of their acts of fasting and humility. The response they receive is twofold: a) repudiation of their present fasting practices which are lacking moral behaviour and social justice (vv. 3b-5), and b) definition of a positive fasting in terms of moral behaviour and social justice (vv. 6-12).

The verb ענה 'to oppress, to humble' linked to the noun נפש as object occurs in Isaiah elsewhere only in Isa. 58:5 (BDB, III. ענה, p. 776, Piel n. 4).

It is found however in Lev. 16 and 23:24-32, two texts which deal with fasting and cultic-ascetic practices. In Lev. 23:24 it is recorded that 'trumpet blasts' (זכרון) were sounded on the day of Atonement and the people were required to 'deny themselves (fast)' עניתם את־נפשיכם (cf. 16:31; 23:27, 32; 16:29), so as to be purified on their sins (16:30) and to cease totally from work on that day (16:29, 23:28, 31). Moreover, during

this day Aaron officially confessed all the people's sins and transgressions (וְאֶת־כָּל־פְּשִׁיהֶם לְכָל־חַטָּאתָם, 16:21).

According to Fishbane, the Pentateuchal legal materials dealing with rules and regulations of the day of Atonement thus serve as the linguistic and ideological matrix for their inversion and reapplication in Isa. 58:1-12 in terms of social justice. However, Isa. 58:1-12 does not reject the fasting. On the contrary, the text "delineates the true, social-spiritual meaning of the cultic act of fasting" (1985, 305, 307). The fact that a higher value is put on ethical actions compared to the cultic ones is an expression of the decidedly enlightened intellectualism of the mantic wisdom (von Rad, 1972, 188).

The double use of הָן at the beginning of vv. 3b and 4a displays the reasons why YHWH does not recognize Israel's practices: 'they *occupy* themselves with their own business on their fast-day', 'they *oppress* their workers', and 'they *fast for strife and contention and to strike with a wicked fist*' (4a) (Polan, 1986, 196).

Their fast-days were characterized by '*strife*' and '*contention*'. They even resort to physical violence.

The expression '*to strike with a fist*' נָכָה בְּאֶגְרִף is found elsewhere in the Old Testament in Exod. 21:18 (*When individuals quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or fist so that the injured party, though not dead, is confined to bed...*). The meaning in Isa. 58:4 is that they have missed the true "goal of what fasting should accomplish by proliferating wickedness" (Polan, 1986, 198), as it is shown from the combination of the word '*fist*' with the word רָשָׁע '*wickedness*'.

In v. 4b Israelites are told that they fast in a manner which does not enable their '*voice to be heard on high*' by YHWH.

It has been noted by Steck (1991e, 213) that Isa. 58:4b alludes to Isa. 1:15: *When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen* אֵינֶנִּי שֹׁמֵעַ; *your hands are full of blood, which is part of Isa. 1:10-17 which points out to the people the correct way to*

serve YHWH. YHWH neither requires nor requests cultic sacrifice and false festival observance. He requires moral behaviour and social justice. Isa. 1:15 explains YHWH's unwillingness to endure the people's cultic practices and His refusal to respond to their prayer (*I will not listen*): it is because of their 'hands' which are full of 'evil doings' (v. 16).

Although Isa. 58:4b describes why YHWH does not accept Israel's practice of fasting it reflects the same re-interpretation of cultic practices in terms of moral behaviour and social justice, as in Isa. 1:10-20.

Isaiah 58:5

הכזה יהיה צום אבחרהו יום ענות אדם נפשו

הלכך כאגמן ראשו ושק ואפר יציע

הלזה תקרא-צום ויום רצון ליהוה:

Is this the fast that I choose, a day when a person humbles oneself?

Is it to bend down one's head like a rush and to spread out (to lie upon)

sackcloth and ashes?

Do you call this a fast and a day acceptable to YHWH?

The function of v. 5 is to show that the authenticity of the fast-day and the practices carried out on it are questionable. Both their wicked deeds of vv. 3b-4b and the traditional acts of v. 5b are not what YHWH chooses. The questions posed in v. 5 await answers in the following verses.

The question in 58:5a is parallel with that of YHWH's attitude to the formal observance of sacrifice expressed in Isa. 1:11: *What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says YHWH...*, which does not state that "the cult had no place in true religion, but rather that it could not be used to secure YHWH's protection and blessing in contradiction to man's sin" (Clements, 1980, 33).

V. 5b gives account of the hypocrisy of people's acts during the fasting.

The word אגמן 'rush' shows the inward humility which is described as genuine fasting.

'Sackcloth' שק is the symbol of mourning and humiliation (BDB, p. 974).

While Israelites externally show signs of being contrite (5b) their other deeds (3b-4b) expose their lack of true sorrow. Their wicked deeds of vv.3b-4b and the hypocritical present fasting practices of v.5b are not what YHWH chooses (*a day acceptable to YHWH*) nor are they to be called a fast.

Isaiah 58:6

הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבַחֲרֶהוּ

פֶּתַח חֲרָצְבוֹת רָשָׁע הֲתֵר אֲגִדּוֹת מוֹטָה

וְשַׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חֲפָשִׁים וְכָל־מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ:

Is not this the fast that I choose,

to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to unfasten the thongs of the yoke,

to set free the oppressed, and break every yoke?

Vv. 6-12 constitute the second response to the question raised by the people in v. 3a, and consist of instructions concerning the kind of behaviour that could make fasting acceptable to YHWH (vv. 6-7, 9b-10a), and which will enable them to participate in the era of salvation (vv. 8-9a, 10b-12).

In v.6ff. the first form of the fast that would be acceptable to YHWH is described and it has in it none of the customary observances. It consists in the rescue of the ‘*oppressed*’.

The expression ‘*to loosen the bonds of wickedness, to unfasten the thongs of the yoke*’ פֶּתַח חֲרָצְבוֹת רָשָׁע הֲתֵר אֲגִדּוֹת מוֹטָה, where the repetition of the word רָשָׁע calls for reflection upon its prior use in v. 4a, shows “the movement in the passage from an old mode of behaviour to a new one abolishing wickedness” (Polan, 1986, 208). In v. 6b the word רָשָׁע is parallel to the word מוֹטָה ‘yoke’, and this combination is found only here and in Isa. 58:9. The latter is also parallel in v. 6c to the word רְצוּצִים ‘*oppressed*’, which is the passive participle of the verb רָצַץ ‘*to crush*’, and it is used metaphorically of weak and oppressed persons.

The idea of protection of 'the oppressed' is found Isa. 1:17bc though the vocabulary is different: *rescue the oppressed* אֲשֶׁר חָמוּץ (literally: *set right the ruthless*, but read as passive with BHS: *the oppressed*), *defend the orphan, plead for the widow*, where one of YHWH's instructions to Israel for proper service is moral behaviour (1:16-17a.bα) and social justice.

Social injustice was always present in Israel and it has been condemned in other places in the book of Isaiah (cf. 3:13-15; 10:1-4; 5:8-24). However, the re-interpretation of cultic practices (here fasting, Lev. 16; 23:24-32) in terms of social justice and ethical behaviour is the result of wisdom influence (cf. Prov. 15:8: *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to YHWH, but the prayer of the upright is his delight*; 15:29: *YHWH is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous*; 17:1: *Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of sacrificial meat with strife* זֶבַח חֵירָיִב; 21:3: *To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to YHWH than sacrifice*; 21:27: *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when brought with evil intent*; Sirach 34:23-27: (23) *The Most High is not pleased with the offerings of the ungodly, nor for a multitude of sacrifices does he forgive sins.* (24) *Like one who kills a son before his father's eyes is the person who offers a sacrifice from the property of the poor.* (25) *The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; whoever deprives them of it is a murderer.* (26) *To take away a neighbour's living is to commit murder*; (27) *to deprive an employee of wages is to shed blood*; 35:5, 8-9: (5) *To keep from wickedness is pleasing to YHWH, and to forsake unrighteousness is an atonement.* (8) *The offering of the righteous enriches the altar, and its pleasing odour rises before the Most High.* (9) *The sacrifice of the righteous is acceptable, and it will never be forgotten*) (von Rad, 1972, 186-189; cf. Davidson, 105). The re-interpretation of cultic practices in terms of social justice and ethical behaviour is found in the book of Isaiah in Isa. 1:10-17; 56:3-7, 66:3: sacrifice; 56:2, 58:13: sabbath; 57:15, 66:1-2: YHWH's dwelling place.

The exegesis in 58:1-12 is aggadic of a legal traditum (Lev. 16; 23:24-32) and not mantological (Fishbane, 1985, 304-306).

Isaiah 58:7

הֲלוֹא פָרַם לָרַעֵב לַחֲמֵךְ וְעֲנִיִּים מְרוּדִים תְּבִיא בֵּית
כִּי־תִרְאֶה עָרֹם וּכְסִיתוֹ וּמִבָּשָׂרְךָ לֹא תִתְעַלֵּם:

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into
your house;*

*when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own
flesh?*

In verse 7 the second form of the fast that would be acceptable to YHWH consists in ‘the *sharing of bread with the hungry*’, clothing of ‘*the naked*’, and housing of ‘*the homeless poor*’ people. These pleas for personal concern for the people in need occur nowhere else in the book of Isaiah.

Similar obligations for social provision to those in need are found in Isa. 1:17c: *defend the orphan, plead for the widow*, where the case of people in need, such as orphans and widows, is displayed as an illustration of the way of serving true religion.

The instruction in v. 7 concludes with a final call for a personal giving of the self to any person in want among human beings. According to Polan, “it seems anticlimactic to have a reference to caring for your own flesh or kinfolk after the preceding cola have stressed an all-encompassing concern for the hungry, the wandering, and the naked” (1986, 209-210). Therefore the word בָּשָׂר ‘*flesh (human beings)*’ is equivalent here to the expression כָּל־בָּשָׂר ‘*all flesh*’ referring to all humanity.

Isaiah 58:8-9a

⁸ אֲזִי יִבְקַע כְּשַׁחַר אֹרֶךְ וְאֶרְכָּתְךָ מִהֲרָה תִצְמַח

וְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵיךְ צֶדֶק כְּבוֹד יְהוָה יֵאֲסֹפֶךָ:

^{9a} אֲזִי תִקְרָא וִיהוֶה יַעֲנֶה תִשׁוּעַ וַיֹּאמֶר הַנְּנִי

(8) *Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing will spring
up quickly,*

*your deliverance will go before you, the glory of YHWH will be your rear-
guard.*

(9a) *Then you shall call, and YHWH will answer, you will cry out for help, and he will say, 'Here I am'.*

The reward of the authentic fast, the redemptive coming, is described in v. 8a in terms of the image of *'light breaking forth like the dawn'* and from that there comes Israel's *'healing'* which *'springs up quickly'*.

'Light' as a metaphor for the saving action of YHWH is used also in Isa. 9:1 (NRSV 2): *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light אור; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light אור has shined*, which is part of the promise of the birth of an heir to *'the house of David'* who will bring salvation and greatness to Israel. In Isa. 58:8, however, the salvation of the people depends on their true fasting which consists in moral behaviour, social justice, and benevolence to the needy (3b-7).

The link between the promise of salvation and the observance of true religious practices alludes to Isa. 1:19-20: (19) *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;* (20) *but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of YHWH has spoken*, which is a conditional promise of salvation (act-consequence relationship) following the instructions for proper service of YHWH (1:10-17).

In v. 8b the parallel character of כבוד and צדק shows the sense of צדק to be salvific instead of moral as seen in 58:2 (Rendtorff, 1984, 313; Koenen, 1990, 101, n. 249).

The expression *'your deliverance goes before you הלך לפניך, the glory of YHWH is your rear-guard יאספך'* is reminiscent of Isa. 52:12 (Koenen, 1989, 255-258; cf. Hanson, 1975, 108): *For you shall not go out in haste, and you shall not go in flight; for YHWH will go before you הלך לפניכם, and the God of Israel will be your rear-guard מאספכם*, where the return from exile is envisaged as a new exodus and draws on the language of the exodus tradition (Exod. 12:11; 13:21-22; 14:19-20; Deut. 1:30-33; 16:3) (Whybray, 1975, 168; Westermann, 1969, 253), where YHWH had guided and protected the Israelites in their flight from Egypt. In Isa. 58:8b, however, there is no such specific context of return from exile (new exodus).

In v. 9a the salvific character of YHWH's answer to the people's prayer (*you shall call...you will cry out for help*) is the assurance of His presence and guidance in life.

V. 9aα 'you shall call, and YHWH will answer' וַיַּעֲנֵה יְהוָה seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 30:19: *Truly, O people in Zion, inhabitants of Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry זַעֲקֶךָ; when he hears it, he will answer עֲנֶךָ*, which is part of a general promise of salvation. In v. 19 "the assumption behind the promise is that the hoped-for renewal has been long delayed, but will now surely come" (Clements, 1980, 250).

b) Isa. 41:17: *When the poor and needy וְהָאֲבִיּוֹנִים seek water, and there is none, and their tongue is parched with thirst, I YHWH will answer them אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲעֲנֵם*, I the God of Israel will not forsake them, which is part of a promise of salvation, 41:17-20, referring to the return home of the exiles through the desert. V. 17 is a promise of miracles by YHWH to help the 'poor and needy' to endure the difficulties of the journey.

In these passages the salvation is described as a "state of bliss" (the phrase employed by Westermann, 1969, 339). In Isa. 58:9, however, the perspective is different: the answering of people's prayers presupposes their care for the hungry and 'homeless' (58:7).

Isaiah 58:9b-10

אִם־תִּסִּיר מִתּוֹכָךְ מוֹטֵה שֶׁלַח אֲצַבֵּעַ וּדְבַר־אֹוֶן:^{9b}

וּתִפֹּק לָרֶעִב נֶפֶשׁךָ וּנְפֹשׁ נִעְנָה תִשְׁבִּיעַ¹⁰

וְזָרַח בַּחֹשֶׁךְ אֹרֶךְ וְאִפְלֹתָךְ כִּצְהָרִים:

(9b) *If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of wickedness.*

(10) *and if you offer (bring out) yourself to the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,*

then your light shall rise in the darkness, and your gloominess be like the noon.

Isa. 58:9b-12 uses similar terms in speaking of social obligation and is identical in form to 58:6-9a, being a conditional promise of salvation. Vv. 9b-10a present the conditions on which YHWH's promise of salvation will act (vv. 10b-12): a call to remove the yoke from among them, and two examples of oppressive yokes: interpersonal moral iniquities (*the pointing of the finger* (in token of scorn) and *the speaking of wickedness*).

The verb סור *'to put away, to remove'* is found in Isa. 1:16: *Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove הסיירו the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil*, with the same meaning, that is, exhortation to the cessation of the people's immoral behaviour.

The expression *'pointing of the finger'* שלח אצבע is a sign of contempt and occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah; however a similar expression occurs in Prov. 6:13 to describe a gesture of contempt: (12) *A scoundrel and a villain goes around...*(13) *winking the eyes, shuffling the feet, pointing the fingers מרה באצבעתיו*, (14) *with perverted mind devising evil, continually sowing discord*.

V. 10a expands and broadens the call to *'share bread with the hungry'* (58:7a) to give now more than bread - *'to offer (bring out) yourself to the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted'* (inner-textual exegesis).

58:10b-12 announce the results of the conditional statements of 58:9b-10a. It is a promise of salvation.

The light imagery is brought back from v. 8a. The light breaking forth at dawn in v. 8 moves to its full display of brilliance at noon in v. 10b.

Isaiah 58:11

ונחך יהוה תמיד והשביע בצחצחות נפשך
ועצמתיך יחליץ והיית כגן רוה
וכמוצא מים אשר לא-יכזבו מימיו:

*YHWH will guide you continually, and satisfy you in scorched regions,
and make your bones strong. And you shall be like a watered garden,*

and like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

Verse 11a describes YHWH's salvific action towards the people: He *guides* נחה, *satisfies* שבע, and *makes strong* חליץ.

The expression 'YHWH will guide you continually' נחך יהוה תמיד seems to allude to Isa. 42:16: *I will lead הולכתי the blind by a road they do not know, by paths they have not known I will guide them אדריכם. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground*, which is a promise of salvation by YHWH to the returning exiles who are in a hopeless state. V. 16 promises that YHWH will protect them in their journey.

The salvific guidance of YHWH in 58:11 presupposes care for 'the hungry and the afflicted' (58:10a).

Verse 11b specifies a new aspect of the salvific promise YHWH offers. It speaks of the blessings by means of different images of water. Israel will be 'like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters never fail'.

The expression מוצא מים 'spring of water' seems to allude to Isa. 41:18: *I will open rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water מוצאי מים*, where YHWH promises to protect the returnees from exile with salvific miracles. In Isa. 58:11b, however, is the fulfilment of the conditional framework of doing justice and righteousness, a framework provided by vv. 9b-10a (cf. Isa. 1:19: the act-consequence pattern).

Isaiah 58:12

ובנו ממך חרבות עולם מוסדי דור־דור תקומם
וקרא לך גדר פריץ משבב נתיבות לשבת:

Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt (literally: and they shall build your ancient ruins); you will raise up the foundations of many generations, and you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths in which to dwell.

The images of salvation by YHWH are completed in v. 12. Corresponding to the inward vitality of Israel will be the outward renewed prosperity of her land: *'your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you will raise up the foundations of many generations'*. The concern for the restoration of Zion in 58:12 is taken up from Isa. 52:7-10 and it becomes one of the elements of the eschatological expectation in all the structural units of Isaiah 56-66 (cf. 57:13c; 60:10,13; 62:7)

In v. 12b significant names are pronounced upon the people. The pattern of giving of a new name (קרא ל) is also found in Isa. 60:14b, 61:3c, 62:2b, 62:4b, 62:12 and symbolizes "both a change in the people and the entry into a new era of salvation" (Polan, 1986, 222-223). The syntactical pattern of giving of new names in Isaiah 7-8 is different (Isa. 7:14: *and shall name him Immanuel*, קרא שמו; 8:3: *name him Maher-shalalhash-baz* שמו קרא).

Isaiah 58:13

אם-תשיב משבת רגלך עשות חפצך ביום קדשי

וקראת לשבת ענג לקדוש יהוה מכבד

וכבדתו מעשות דרכיך ממצוא חפצך ודבר דבר:

If you draw back your foot from the sabbath, from doing your affairs on my holy day,

and (if you) call the sabbath a delight and the holy (day) of YHWH honourable, and (if) you honour it by not doing your own ways and occupying yourself with your own affairs or speaking empty words,

Isa. 58:13-14, is consistent with the preceding verses in structure as a conditional promise (from protasis in v.13, initiated by אם and to apodosis in v. 14, initiated by ואז), in tone as an exhortation, in subject matter as concerned with a religious institution, in this instance the sabbath, and in its attitude. Here traditional forms of sabbath observance are re-affirmed but this customary practice is re-interpreted with an apparent social

dimension, contrary to Westermann who believes the opposite (1969, 340-341).

In view of this it is unlikely that the radical reinterpretation of fasting in terms of social justice in 58:3-12 is to be taken as an attack on the official cult whose adherents' words are quoted in 58:3a, as Hanson has argued (1975, 108, 109-110). Rather it constitutes a powerful plea to preserve the ethical motivation of religious observance.

The character of verses 13-14 resembles that of 56:2, 4b, 6b where the sabbath is re-interpreted in accordance with the criteria set out in 56:1a: *maintain justice, and do what is right*. In 58:13-14 a high degree of value is placed on the proper observance of the Sabbath as well as on the practice of social justice. According to Smith, "the demand for Sabbath observance may have had a social impetus at its roots, since (according to Deut. 5:12-15) the Sabbath was intended as a day of rest from work. This would correspond well with the charges in 58:13-14 that the people are doing business on the Sabbath" (1995, 113). Isa. 58:13 placing Sabbath side by side with its appeal for social kindness stresses the humane aspect of a labour-free day (Muilenburg, 1956, 684; cf. Barre, 1985, 96).

Isaiah 58:14

אז תתענג על-יהוה והרכבתיך על-במותי ארץ

והאכלתיך נחלת יעקב אביך כי פי יהוה דבר:

then you shall take delight in YHWH, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth,

and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, because the mouth of YHWH has spoken.

The promise of salvation is expressed in a series of phrases: *and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth, I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father*, which imply undisturbed possession of the land and the people's partaking of the produce of their land (cf. 62:8-9).

The expression *'I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth'* *יִרְכַּבְהוּ עַל-בְּמוֹתֵי אֶרֶץ* occurs nowhere else in the book of Isaiah, but it is re-used here from Moses' song in Deut. 32:9, 13 where the people are told of the past benefactions that *'Jacob was YHWH's own portion נַחֲלָתוֹ*' and that YHWH *'set him atop the heights of the land, and fed him with produce of the field יִרְכַּבְהוּ עַל-בְּמוֹתֵי אֶרֶץ*'. In Isa. 58:14, however, these benefactions have an eschatological character; they are set in the future. In addition, 58:14 refers to the land as the inheritance of the people, not the people as YHWH's inheritance. "Such a transformation fully accords with the pervasive post-exilic concern with return to the land, with the added factor that true Sabbath observance is the key to sustained tenure there" (cf. Neh. 13:15-18 and Ezek. 20:12 where the profaning of the Sabbath is regarded as principal reason for Judah's downfall and thus its proper observance as vital for the right relationship between YHWH and Israel) (Fishbane, 1985, 478-479).

The expression *'I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father'* *הָאֲכַלְתִּיךָ נַחֲלַת יַעֲקֹב אָבִיךָ* seems to allude to Isa. 49:8: *Thus says YHWH: In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages נַחֲלֹת*, where YHWH promises to repopulate and restore the land of Palestine which has been left desolate as a result of the exile. In Isa. 58:14, however, there is no reference to *'desolate'* heritages. Isa. 58:14 expresses YHWH's promise for the people's partaking of the produce of their land (cf. 62:8-9).

The formula *כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר* *'because the mouth of YHWH has spoken'* gives these verses the appearance of a prophetic oracle. It is an indication of mantological exegesis in vv. 13-14, and points to the re-use of an older prophecy which is going to be fulfilled (Fishbane, 1985, 477-478). The same formula is also found in Isa. 1:20b: *...for the mouth of YHWH has spoken* *כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר*, which is the closing phrase of Isa. 1:10-19 (vv. 10-17: reinterpretation of traditional cultic observances in terms of moral

behaviour and social justice; vv. 18-19: conditional promise of salvation) and 40:5 (closing phrase of the promise of the return of the exiles).

The investigation of words, expressions, ideas and themes in Isa. 58:1-14 within the rest of the book of Isaiah showed that most of its vocabulary is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah. However in structure as a conditional promise of salvation and in subject matter as concerned with religious institutions (radical reinterpretation of fasting in terms of moral behaviour and social justice, and Sabbath in terms of social concern) Isa. 58:1-14 is parallel to Isa. 1:10-20 (reinterpretation of sacrifices and customary cultic observances in terms of moral behaviour and social justice).

b) Isaiah 59:1-21

Isaiah 59:1-2

¹ הֵן לֹא-קְצֶרָה יַד-יְהוָה מִחֹשִׁיעַ וְלֹא-כִבְדָּה אָזְנוֹ מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

² כִּי אִם-עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם הִיוּ מִבְדִּילִים בֵּינֵכֶם לְבֵין אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

וְחַטֹּאתֵיכֶם הִסְתִּירוּ פָנִים מִכֶּם מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

(1) *See (behold), YHWH's hand is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.*

(2) *Rather, your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he does not hear.*

59:1-2 forms an appropriate sequel to the promise of chapter 58, on the basis of its conditionality by affirming that when disaster occurs it is due not to YHWH's inadequacy but to his people's sin. This creates an act and consequence relationship between the malpractice of the people and the absence of salvation (von Rad, 1972, 124-137).

59:1-8 develops themes, terms and concepts from 58:6-14 (inner-textual exegesis). In 58:4b the people are told that the kind of fasting that they are practising, that is, without a context of social justice, will not make YHWH hear their voice. This theme is developed in 59:1-2 which states that YHWH's inactivity is not due to his inability to hear (v. 1), but because the sins of the people have caused him to turn away and not hear (v. 2) (Smith, 1995, 115).

The complaint about YHWH's apparent indifference is centred on two anthropomorphic features in v. 1: his hand which does not save and his ear which does not hear. By means of these features the relationship between the absence of salvation and the withdrawal of attentiveness on the part of YHWH is revealed.

The expression 'YHWH's hand is not too short to save' ^{לֹא-קְצֶרָה יַד-יְהוָה מִחֹשִׁיעַ} occurs in Isa. 50:2: (a) *Why was no one there when I came? Why did no one answer when I called?* (b) *Is my hand shortened, that it cannot*

redeem קצרה ידי מפרות? Or have I no power to deliver? (c) *By my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a desert;* (d) *their fish stink for lack of water, and die of thirst,* which is YHWH's assertion of the all-sufficiency of His power (2b), referring to His earlier great deeds at the time of Exodus (2cd), to redeem his people. In v. 2a YHWH accuses the exiles of failing to respond to him when He 'came' and 'called' and this caused their handing over to the Babylonians (v. 1).

V. 2 comments on what precedes. Sinfulness has brought about the situation of v. 1. The problem lies not in any limitation of YHWH's power. It is the result of people's 'iniquities' and 'transgressions' which have raised a barrier between themselves and YHWH.

The theme of Israel's 'iniquity' causing a rupture between her and YHWH, and, consequently, a separation from YHWH¹⁴ seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:4-5: (4) *Ah, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity* עֲוֹן, *offspring who do evil, children who deal corruptly, who have forsaken YHWH, who have despised the Holy One of Israel, who are utterly estranged!* (5) *Why do you seek further beatings? Why do you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint,* where it is stated that the military defeat and humiliation when the Assyrians conquered Judah and Jerusalem was a direct result of the people's own sin and moral corruption. In this case, punishment, that is, a non-saving action by YHWH, because of the people's sin implies a separation in their relationship.

b) Isa. 42:24-25: (24) *Who gave up Jacob to the spoiler, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not YHWH, against whom we have sinned* חַטָּאנוּ, *in whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey?* (25) *So he poured upon him the heat of his anger and the fury of war; it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand; it burned him, but he did not take it to heart,* which expresses the idea that YHWH's

¹⁴ cf. 56:3-8 where eunuchs and foreigners are reassured that as long as they practise justice and righteousness (v. 1), they will not separated (בָּדֵל) from YHWH (v. 3).

permission for the affliction of His people by the Babylonians was caused by the sins of Israelites.

c) Isa. 50:1: *Thus says YHWH: Where is your mother's bill of divorce with which I put her away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? No, because of your sins עון you were sold, and for your transgressions פשע your mother was put away,* where, although YHWH does not deny that He separated himself from His people causing their handing over to the Babylonians, He affirms that the responsibility for this rests upon Israel's 'sins' and 'transgression'.

The theme of YHWH's 'hiding' himself because of the 'sins' of the people alludes to Isa. 1:15 although the vocabulary is different: *When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you אעלים עיני מכם; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood,* which refers to the separation between YHWH and Israel (*I will hide my eyes from you....I will not listen*) because of their perpetration of crimes of violence and of evil-doings (1:16ba). Isa. 59:2b-3a is strongly reminiscent of Isa. 1:15 ((2b) *your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he does not hear. (3a) Because your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity*).

Isaiah 59:3-8

³ כי כפיכם נגאלו בדם ואצבעותיכם בעון
שפתותיכם דברו־שקר לשונכם עולה תהגה:
⁴ אין־קרא בצדק ואין נשפט באמונה
בטוח על־תהו ודבר־שוא הרו עמל והוליד און:
⁵ ביצי צפעוני בקעו וקורי עכביש יארגו
האכל מביצייהם ימות והזורה תבקע אפעה:
⁶ קוריהם לא־יהיו לבגד ולא יתכסו במעשיהם
מעשיהם מעשי־און ופעל חמס בכפיהם:
⁷ רגליהם לרע ירצו וימהרו לשפך דם נקי
מחשבותיהם מחשבות און שד ושבר במסלותם:

⁸ דרך שלום לא ידעו ואין משפט במעגלותם

נתבותיהם עקשו להם כל דרך בה לא ידע שלום:

(3) *Because your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips speak lies, your tongue utters injustice.*

(4) *No one pleads in court justly, no one enters into controversy faithfully. They rely on emptiness, speak vanity, conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity.*

(5) *They hatch adders' eggs, and weave the spider-threads; he who eats their eggs dies, and the pressed (egg) hatches out as a viper.*

(6) *Their threads will not become clothing, they will not cover themselves with their works.*

Their works are works of wickedness, and deeds of violence are in their hands.

(7) *Their feet run for harm (injury), and they rush to shed innocent blood.*

Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, devastation and destruction are in their highways.

(8) *They do not know a way of peace, and there is no justice in their courses (of life).*

They have made their paths crooked (twisted) for themselves, no one who walks in them (literally: in it) knows peace.

By the repetition of the particle כִּי in the beginning of v. 3 the causes for the withdrawal of YHWH's saving presence, the sins of the whole people (not of a group within the community, as in chapter 57), are specified, as it is shown from the pronominal suffix כֶּם- (vv. 2-3) (a direct address to the hearers), and the third masculine plural verbal forms and suffixes הֵם- /ם- (vv. 4-8) (the description of their sins). The 'hands defiled with blood' and the 'fingers with iniquity' in v. 3a prevent 'YHWH's hand' from saving in v. 1aα. The expressions 'your hands are defiled with blood' כְּפִיכֶם נִגְאָלוּ בַדָּם and the similar ones 'deeds of violence are in their hands' וּפְעָלָם חֲמַס בְּכַפֵּיהֶם (v. 6bβ), 'their feet run for harm (injury), and they rush to shed innocent blood'

נקי (v. 7a) allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:15: *When you stretch out your hands כפיכם, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood מלאו ידיכם דמים.*

b) Isa. 1:21: *How the faithful city has become a whore! She that was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her -but now murderers!*, which is part of Isa. 1:21-23 where the corrupt state of Jerusalem is described. V. 21 refers to the city's former state of righteousness and her present state of corruption as indicated by the presence of murderers within her.

Likewise, in Isa. 59 the crimes of violence appear to be committed by all the people, and there is no evidence that those attacked are “the defiled cult community” (Hanson, 1975, 120, 121), because the context is not the ritual irregularities but the moral and social corruption and the uncontrolled progress of injustice (vv. 3-8). The second person masculine plural pronouns (*you*) in vv. 1-3 link up with chapter 58 and the conclusion which can be drawn is that it is still בית יעקב and עמי who are being addressed (Schramm, 1995, 138; cf. Smith, 1995, 114-116) and not the Zadokite priests.

The emphasis of the indictment against the people is not only on violent deeds but also on lying words (v. 3b).

The expression ‘*your lips speak lies*’ שפתותיכם דברו־שקר and the parallel expression ‘*your tongue utters injustice*’ לשונכם עולה תהגה, which means injustice of speech (BDB, עולה, p. 732, n. 2), allude to Isa. 32:7: *The villainies of villains are evil; they devise wicked devices to ruin the poor with lying words באמרי־שקר, even when the plea of the needy is right*, which is part of a “didactic homily” betraying “a sense of disillusionment with the assurances of vv. 1-5” (which present an idealised picture of king Josiah and a just and righteous political social order, in the view of Clements (1980, 260). The description in v. 7 refers to “the abuse of processes of

law and justice in the courts by making false charges, or giving false evidence” (ibid, 261).

The indictments for physical violence (vv. 3a, 6bβ, 7a) and lying (3b) are connected with the accusations of the perversion of the legal processes (vv. 4a, 9a, 14) and the rupture of peace in human relations because of the unjust way of life (v. 8).

As in chapter 58, once again the concern is with the perversion of justice, there with moral and social justice, here with moral behaviour and justice in the law courts where injury is done to the innocent. However, in Isa. 58 the moral behaviour and social justice are the principles on the basis of which the practice of a ritual institution, fasting, is appropriate. By contrast with Hanson (1975, 120-121), in Isa. 59 moral and social, not ritual, offences are in question (vv. 2, 3).

In v. 4 the people are accused of perverting the legal system because they do not ‘*plead in court justly*’ and do not ‘*enter into controversy faithfully*’ but continue to lie (*rely on emptiness* תָּדַר, *speak vanity* שׁוֹא) and do evil (*conceive mischief* עֲמַל and *bring forth iniquity* אֵין).

The theme of the corrupted legal system is a common-place in the book of Isaiah. It is found in the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:23: *Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not defend the orphan, and the widow’s cause does not come before them*, which, focusing on the leaders of the city who love bribes and pursue gifts, states that justice is corrupt in that orphans are not judged correctly and the cases of widows are not considered in court.

b) Isa. 5:23: *who acquit the guilty for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of their rights!*, which is a part of a series of *woe*-sayings warning the leaders of Jerusalem of the coming judgement upon them (5: 8-24). V. 23 expresses disapproval of the corrupted legal processes where the members of the court accept ‘*bribes*’ from the accused defendants.

c) Isa. 29:21: *those who cause a person to lose a lawsuit, who set a trap for the arbiter in the gate and without grounds deny justice to the one in the right*

יטו בתהו צדיק, which is part of a promise of the coming age of salvation reassuring the ‘*neediest*’ and the oppressed that they will find ‘*joy*’ and freedom because ‘*the tyrant shall be no more*’. In v. 29:21 there is an assurance that the perversion of justice by “frustrating the evidence of, and even using violence against an honest citizen who brings a valid case against another” (21a) and “by giving deliberately misleading evidence” (21b) (Clements, 1980, 242) will cease.

In v. 5a metaphorical language and striking poetic imagery are used to describe those who act in this manner (v. 4), but there is no evidence that these are “the priestly leaders controlling the cult” (Hanson, 1975, 122). The accusations are general and could be attributed to any group of sinners in the community.

They are compared to ‘*adders*’ whose ‘*eggs*’ cause death (v. 5), and to ‘*spiders*’ who ‘*weave threads*’ from which nothing can be made (vv. 5-6a).

The unrighteous ones only produce ‘*wickedness*’ and ‘*violence*’ (v. 6b) and ‘*their feet run for harm, and they rush to shed innocent blood*’ (v. 7a).

In v. 7b and 8 four words, synonyms, for highway (מעגלות, דרך, מסלות, תיבותיה) are used metaphorically to describe the conduct of people who are accused of flagrant social ‘*iniquity*’ apparent not only in their ‘*deeds*’ (vv. 6b-7a) but also in their ‘*thoughts*’ (v. 7b). ‘*Highway*’ vocabulary is in fact more widespread in the book of Isaiah. The word מסלה ‘*highway*’ in 40:3 (cf. 35:8: מסלול) and 49:11 refers to the highway for the physical journey of the returning exiles (cf. 11:16: highway for the return of scattered Jews from Egypt and Assyria). Isa. 33:8 (*the highways are deserted*) may have been part of the negative background which 40:1-11 will reverse (Williamson, 1994, 234). In 19:23 ‘*the highway from Egypt to Assyria*’ reflects the international trade and commerce of the Hellenistic age (Clements, 1980, 172). In 62:10 (מסלה) as in 57:14 (דרך) there is no question of physical return to the homeland; it is the ‘*way*’ of the life of devotion to YHWH which the inhabitants of Jerusalem must lead if their desire for her

prosperity is to be fulfilled. In 36:2 also the ‘highway’ is used to describe the physical road.

The widespread prevalence of iniquity (*works of wickedness* (6b), *thoughts of iniquity* (7b)) has caused the lack of peace and friendship even in human relations (*they do not know a way of peace, no one...knows peace*) because of their unjust way of life (*there is no justice in their courses of life*) which is their own creation: ‘*their crooked paths*’ are of their own making (v. 8).

Isaiah 59:9-11

⁹ עַל־כֵּן רַחֵק מִשְׁפָּט מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִשְׁיָגֵנוּ צְדָקָה
נִקְוָה לְאֹר וְהִנְהַחֲשֹׁךְ לִנְגָהוֹת בְּאַפְלוֹת נְהַלְךְ:
¹⁰ נִגְשָׁשָׁה כְּעֹרִים קִיר וּכְאִין עֵינִים נִגְשָׁשָׁה
כְּשִׁלְנוּ בְּצַהֲרִים כְּנִשְׁף בְּאַשְׁמָנִים כְּמַתִּים:
¹¹ נִהְמָה כְּדָבִים כָּלֵנוּ וּכְיוֹנִים הִגָּה נִהְגָּה
נִקְוָה לְמִשְׁפָּט וְאִין לִישׁוּעָה רַחֲמָה מִמֶּנּוּ:

(9) *Therefore, justice is far from us, and deliverance (righteousness) does not reach us.*

We hope for light, but see, distress (darkness), and for prosperity (brightness), but we walk in calamity (gloominess).

(10) *We grope like the blind along a wall, and (we grope) like those who have no eyes.*

We stumble at noon, as in the evening twilight, we are among the vigorous like the dead.

(11) *We all growl like the bears, and moan mournfully like doves.*

We hope for justice, but there is no one. (We hope) for salvation, but it is far from us.

The particle עַל־כֵּן ‘*therefore*’ expresses the result of what is previously stated: because of all this sin, of which the people are accused in vv. 2-3 and which is described in vv. 4-8 (moral offences, not cultic irregularities, and insidious evils by which justice is perverted in the law courts, and the

crimes of physical violence), the nation now suffers. This relationship is intensified from the repetition of the same theme in verses 4a (*No one pleads in court justly, none enters into controversy faithfully*), 8a (*there is no justice in their courses of life*), and 9a (*Therefore, justice is far from us, and deliverance (righteousness) does not reach us*).

From the beginning of vv. 9-13 salvation is linked to justice and righteousness. Within the context of the unit as a whole, vv. 9-15a function once again to make explicit the causal connection between the people's sins and the delay of the era of salvation. The absence of YHWH's redemptive hand (59:1) is due to the unrighteousness of the people (59:1-8).

The understanding that salvation by YHWH is intimately connected with the exercise of justice and righteousness recalls Isa. 56:1. While 56:1 calls for the observance of righteousness and justice because of the coming of salvation, 59:9a, 11b ties the remoteness of salvation to the absence of justice and righteousness.

They lament (in first plural) that they '*hope for light, but see, distress (darkness), and for prosperity (brightness), but they walk in calamity (gloominess)*' (v. 9b).

In v. 10a a simile is used to compare the distressed to those who are blind and without eyes (*We grope like the blind along a wall, and like those who have no eyes*) and to express their total helplessness.

The expression '*We stumble at noon, as in the evening twilight, we are among the vigorous like the dead*' כשלנו בצהרים כנשף באשמנים כמתים expresses in different words the distress of the people.

In v. 11 the distress of the nation (*we all* כלנו) is depicted with another simile: '*We all growl like the bears*' נהמה כדבים כלנו.

The expression '*moan mournfully like doves*' כיונים הנה נהגה is used in Isa. 38:14: *Like a swallow or a crane I clamour, I moan like a dove* אהגה כיונה. *My eyes are weary with looking upward. O YHWH, I am oppressed; be my security*, to express the sickness of Hezekiah.

Isaiah 59:12

¹² כִּי־רְבוּ פִשְׁעֵינוּ נִגְדָךְ וְחַטָּאוֹתֵינוּ עֲנֹתָה בָנוּ

כִּי־פִשְׁעֵינוּ אִתָּנוּ וְעֹנֹתֵינוּ יָדְעָנוּם:

¹³ פִּשַׁע וְכַחַשׁ בִּיהוָה וְנִסּוּג מֵאַחֵר אֱלֹהֵינוּ

דְּבַר־עֲשֵׂק וְסֵרָה הָרוּ וְהָגוּ מִלֵּב דְּבַר־יִשְׁקָר:

(12) *For our transgressions are multiplied before you, and our sins testify against us.*

Indeed our transgressions are with us, and we know our iniquities:

(13) *transgressing, and denying YHWH, and turning away from following our God;*

speaking oppression and defection (apostasy), conceiving and uttering from the heart, lying words.

V. 12 forms a “confession of sin” (Westermann, 1969, 349). The people confess that their ‘*transgressions*’ are many before YHWH. Similarly they admit that their ‘*sins*’ remain with them.

The sins confessed in v. 12 are described more precisely in v. 13. Not only do the people acknowledge their oppressive speech (*speaking oppression* דְּבַר־עֲשֵׂק) and ‘*defection (apostasy)*’ סֵרָה which implies any moral or legal offence, and lying, but also that their transgressions are a denial כַּחַשׁ and turning away וְנִסּוּג from YHWH.

The theme of separation from YHWH because of the people’s sins, and several words (עוֹן, חַטָּאת, דְּבַר־יִשְׁקָר, פִּשַׁע) from vv. 1-3 recur and link the opening accusations in vv. 1-3 with the theme of the acknowledgement of sin in vv. 12-13. By employing the vocabulary of the accusations (vv. 1-3), vv. 12-13 affirm the indictment by the accused themselves.

Isaiah 59:14-15a

¹⁴ וְהִסַּג אַחֲרָיִךְ מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה מִרְחוֹק תִּעְמָד

כִּי־כִשְׁלָה בִּרְחוֹב אֱמֶת וְנִכְחָה לֹא־תוּכַל לָבוֹא:

ותהי האמת נעדרת וסר מרע משתולל^{15a}

(14) *So (and) justice is driven (turned) back and righteousness stands at a distance.*

Because truth stumbles in the public square and honesty cannot enter.

(15a) *So (thus) truth is lacking, and whoever departs (turns) from evil is one despoiled.*

Evil has pervaded society both in public and in private relationships: ‘justice’, ‘righteousness’ (14a), ‘honesty’ (14bβ) and ‘truth’ (14bα, 15aα) are lacking in society.

The expression ‘*whoever departs from evil is one despoiled*’ סר מרע משתולל is related to v. 16a (*When he saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one interposing*) and implies that any effort at returning to justice falls prey to the power of evil at work, thus YHWH stands alone to bring redemption (vv. 16b-20).

Isaiah 59:15b-17

וירא יהוה וירע בעיניו כי־אין משפט:^{15b}

וירא כי־אין איש וישתומם כי אין מפגיע¹⁶

ותושע לו זרעו וצדקתו היא סמכתהו:

וילבש צדקה כשרין וכובע ישועה בראשו¹⁷

וילבש בגדי נקם תלבשת ויעט כמעיל קנאה:

(15b) *YHWH saw, and it was evil in his eyes that there was no justice.*

(16) *When he saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one interposing.*

His own arm gave victory to him and his deliverance upheld him.

(17) *He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of victory (salvation) on his head.*

And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a mantle.

In vv. 15b-16a, YHWH sees that there is neither 'justice' nor any person to intercede in this situation, and in vv. 16b-17a he responds by acting with salvation which carries with it a dual notion of both deliverance (16b-17a: (16b) *His own arm זרע gave victory to him and his righteousness upheld him.* (17a) *He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of victory (salvation) on his head*) and punishment (17b: *And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a mantle*), that is, deliverance to those who repent (v. 20) and punishment to the sinners (v. 18a).

V. 16a describes YHWH's active intervention on behalf of his people, emphasizing especially his initiative as sole saviour (*When he saw that there was no one, he was appalled that there was no one interposing*).

Isa. 59:15b-20 provides an illustration of the way in which traditional motifs have been re-interpreted for new situations. What originally concerned YHWH's intervention against foreign enemies (YHWH-the warrior-myth) has now been directed against sinners who have already confessed their sins (59:9-15a).

Thus, v. 16b (*His own arm זרע helped him and his deliverance (righteousness) upheld him*) seems to allude to Isa. 52:10: *YHWH has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God*, where it is implied that the defeat of Babylon by YHWH and the return home of the exiles will amaze the nations of the world. The same theme of YHWH the warrior who fights for perfect righteousness against foreign enemies occurs in the following passages in the book of Isaiah:

a) Isa. 40:10: *See, the God YHWH comes with might, and his arm זרע rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.*

b) Isa. 51:9: *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of YHWH זרע יהוה! Awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago! Was it not you who cut Rahab in pieces, who pierced the dragon?*

c) Isa. 42:13: *YHWH goes forth like a soldier, like a warrior he stirs up his fury; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes, where the coming deliverance from Babylon is portrayed as a new Exodus with the*

protection of YHWH the warrior, leading the exiles in the way He did in the first Exodus (Exod. 15:3).

d) 49:25: *But thus says YHWH: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued; for I will contend with those who contend with you, and I will save your children,* where once again YHWH assures the exiles that he will fight with the Babylonians.

Isaiah 59:18-20

¹⁸ כַּעַל גַּמְלוֹת כַּעַל יִשְׁלַם חֲמָה לְצָרָיו גַּמּוֹל לְאֹיְבָיו

לְאֵיִם גַּמּוֹל יִשְׁלַם:

¹⁹ וַיִּירָאוּ מִמַּעַרְב־אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה וּמִמְזָרְח־שֶׁמֶשׁ אֶת־כְּבוֹדוֹ

כִּי־יָבֹא כְנָהָר צָר רֹוחַ יְהוָה נִסְסָה בּוֹ:

²⁰ וּבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל וּלְשִׁבִי פֹשַׁע בִּיעַקֵּב נֶאֱמַר יְהוָה:

(18) *According to their deeds is (that which) he will repay: wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies.*

To the coastlands he will repay recompense.

(19) *And those in the west shall fear the name of YHWH, and those in the east, his glory;*

because he will come like a contracted (and hence swift, powerful, rushing) stream. The breath of YHWH drives it on.

(20) *And he will come to Zion (as) a redeemer, and to those in Jacob who turn back from transgression, says YHWH.*

In vv. 15b-20 the fight of YHWH to secure justice and righteousness brings salvation to ‘those in Jacob who turn back from transgression’ (v. 20), and ‘vengeance’ (v. 17b) upon, and ‘wrath’ and ‘recompense’ to, ‘his adversaries’ and ‘his enemies’ (v. 18a).

The theme, however, of the reward by YHWH according to one’s deeds, that is, the principle of retribution dominates the moral teaching of the wisdom tradition. “Bad actions produce bad results and good actions produce good ones” (cf. Prov. 10:29: *The way of YHWH is a stronghold for the upright, but destruction for evildoers*; 11:21: *Be assured, the wicked will not go*

*unpunished, but those who are righteous will escape; 12:7: The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand; 15:6: In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but trouble befalls the income of the wicked, 9: The way of the wicked is an abomination to YHWH, but he loves the one who pursues righteousness)*¹⁵.

In the book of Isaiah it is found in the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:24: *Therefore says the Sovereign, YHWH of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: Ah, I will pour out my wrath on my enemies* אֲנַחֵם מִצָּרִי, *and avenge myself on my foes* אֲנִקְמָה מֵאוֹיְבֵי, where YHWH's enemies are the leaders of Jerusalem who will be replaced by a more just and responsible group of 'counsellors' and 'judges' (v. 26).

b) Isa. 1:27-28: (27) *Zion shall be redeemed by justice* בַּמִּשְׁפָּט תִּפְדָּה, *and those in her who repent, by righteousness* שְׁבִיחַ בַּצְדִּיקָה. (28) *But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together* שֶׁבֶר פֹּשְׁעִים וְחַטָּאִים יִחָדֵר, *and those who forsake YHWH shall be consumed* עֲזֹבֵי יְהוָה יִכָּלֵו, which reflects the fact that the moral infidelity, the physical violence, and perversion of justice is wide-spread in Zion as it is shown in 1:21 (*How the faithful city has become a whore! She that was full of justice, righteousness lodged in her - but now murderers*) and that 'rebels and sinners' are not only the leaders of the city but all her inhabitants. Although the vocabulary is different, Isa. 1:21-28 is parallel to Isa. 59:1-20, in structure and subject as far as it is concerned with the reward by YHWH according to each person's deeds (prosperity for those who repent and wrath to his adversaries- rebels and sinners) in response to the people's sins (violence, perversion of the legal processes, and moral corruption).

¹⁵ Clements, *Wisdom in Theology*, 1992, p. 159; cf. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, pp. 124-137; Kl. Koch, *Is There a Doctrine of Retribution in the Old Testament?*, In: Crenshaw (ed.), *Theodicy in the Old Testament*, 1983, pp. 57-87; Tom Willett, *Eschatology in the Theodicies of 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra*, 1989, pp. 13-16). Cf. more passages from the wisdom literature about the ethical dualism (the contrast between the righteous and the wicked and their fate) in J.G. Gammie's article *Spatial and Ethical Dualism in Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic Literature* (*JBL* 93 (1974), 372-377).

c) Isa. 1:19-20: (19) *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;* (20) *but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword; for the mouth of YHWH has spoken,* which is a strong appeal for repentance of their sins (indicted in 1:15-17) and return to YHWH, made in a conditional form, and it is stated that YHWH offers prosperity and a happy place in society to those who repent (*obedient* to YHWH) of their sins and disaster to those who persist in their sins. This passage is also parallel to 59:1-20.

d) Isa. 3:10-11: (10) *Tell the innocent how fortunate they are, for they shall eat the fruit of their labours.* (11) *Woe to the guilty! How unfortunate they are, for what their hands have done shall be done to them,* where the theme that YHWH punishes the wicked but blesses the righteous follows an account of the internal decay of the nation and city caused by their corrupt leaders (3:1-9).

Vv. 18b *'to the coastlands he will repay recompense'* and 19a *'and those in the west shall fear the name of YHWH, and those in the east, his glory'* do not stand in isolation from the context of YHWH's action described in v. 18a. In the light of 56:6-7 (*And the foreigners who are joined to YHWH, to minister to him, to love the name of YHWH and to be his servants, every one who keeps the sabbath without profaning it, and hold fast my covenant - these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them glad in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and sacrifices for acceptance on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples*) the expansive character of YHWH's offer of salvation to those outside Israel, on condition that they repent of their sins (59:18b) or convert to Judaism observing the religious community's institutions (56:6-7), is demonstrated in epigrammatic manner (cf. also 66:24 where the similar thought, that is, judgement of both Israelites and nations according to their deeds is found).

Isaiah 59:21

ואני זאת בריתי אותם אמר יהוה רוחי אשר עליך ודברי אשר-
שמתי בפיו לא-ימושו מפיו זרעך ומפי זרע זרעך אמר יהוה
מעלה ועד-עולם:

And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says YHWH: my spirit that is upon you and my words, that

I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or from the mouth of your children's children, says YHWH, from now on and for ever.

V. 21 is an extended declaration of the reliability of the oracle as the word of YHWH, such as is frequent in the book of Isaiah.

The majority of commentators agree that verse 21 is a later prose addition because the passage seems to have no connection with its present context either in content or in style, for it is prose in the midst of poetry (e.g. Vermeeylen, 1977-78, 471; Muilenburg, 1956, 687, 696; Koenen, 1990, 66). Steck explains it as a return to the prophetic reception of the divine word in Isa. 58:1. Thus, the prophetic figure in 59:21 is most likely the prophet referred to in 58:1 (1987)1991b, 182). As Emmerson has pointed out, the prophetic office in ancient Israel was not hereditary (1992, 74). Therefore, it seems most likely that the 'children' זרע in 59:21 are probably not the physical children of the prophet, but rather his spiritual children, i.e. those who have responded to his message by repenting and changing their ways in the light of YHWH's imminent intervention. This use of זרע to refer to a faithful remnant within the present nation is also found in 65:9 (Smith, 1995, 126-127).

Structurally and in subject matter Isa. 59:1-20 is parallel to Isa. 1:15-17, 19-20, 21-28, as concerns the reward by YHWH according to each person's deeds (59:15b-20; 1:19-20, 24-28)¹⁶, in response to the people's sins (59:1-15a¹⁷; 1:15-17, 21-23¹⁸).

1) The implications for a mantological exegesis in the second structural unit, Isaiah 58:1-59:21, are the following:

¹⁶ Prosperity for those who repent and wrath to his adversaries-sinners.

¹⁷ Violence, perversion of justice, and moral corruption.

¹⁸ Violence, moral corruption, injustice, perversion of legal processes.

a) Learned preoccupation with older prophecy:

- 58:1 (recontextualization of 13:2 and 40:6, 9): indictment against the people for their sins.
- 58:2 (of 42:24 and 55:8-9).
- 58:8a (of Isa. 9:1); 58:8b (of 52:12); 58:9a α (of 30:19 and 41:17); 58:11a (42:16); 58:11b (of 41:18): deliverance of people by YHWH depends on their true fasting which consists in social care and justice, and moral behaviour.
- 58:12 (of 52:7-10): restoration of Zion.
- 58:14a (of Deut. 32:9, 13).
- 59:1-2 (of 50:1-2): the people's sinful activity has prevented their penitential fasting and pleas for salvation from gaining any response from YHWH (of 1:4-5; 42:24-25; 50:1).
- 59:3-8: description in detail of the malpractice of the people (59:2b-3a, 6b β , 7a of 1:15; 1:21: the theme of YHWH's '*hiding*' himself because of the people's '*sins*', especially perpetration of crimes of violence), (59:3b of 32:7: lying and false charges or evidence in the courts), (59:4a, 9a, 14 of 1:23; 5:23; 29:21: corrupted legal system), (59:4b, 6b α , 7b, 13: moral corruption), (59:8: rupture of peace in human relations because of the unjust way of life).
- 59:15b-17: YHWH's intervention in terms drawn from the 'divine-warrior myth' (of Isa. 40:10; 51:9; 42:13; 49:25).
- 59:18-20 (cf. Isa. 1:19-20, 24-25, 27-18; 3:10-11: YHWH's intervention will bring salvation to those who repent and wrath to his adversaries-sinners).

b) Inner-textual exegesis in 58:6-14 of 58:3b-5 and in 59:1-8 of 58:6-14 (59:1-2 of 58:4b).

c) 58:14b β : the formula כִּי פִי יְהוָה דָּבַר '*because the mouth of YHWH has spoken*'.

2) Implications for an aggadic exegesis:

Isa. 58:3-10a (aggadic exegesis of Lev. 16 and 23:24-32): reinterpretation of fasting in terms of moral behaviour and social justice.

3) Wisdom themes and vocabulary:

Reinterpretation of cultic observances (58:3-10a: fasting; 58:13: sabbath) in terms of moral behaviour and social justice.

58:4: the word **מִצָּה** 'contention' (only in Prov. 13:10, 17:19).

58:9b: the expression '*the pointing of the finger*' as a sign of contempt (only in Prov. 6:13).

59:18aα: the theme of the reward by YHWH according to one's deeds (the principle of retribution).

Ethical dualism on moral grounds: destruction of the wicked (59:18aβ, 18b, 19) and salvation of the righteous (59:20).

3. Isaiah 60:1-63:6

The main focus of the third structural unit, Isa. 60:1-63:6, is Zion's eschatological transformation to a glorious city (60-62) with the nations as instruments of the restoration with the use of force and finally their destruction (63:1-6).

The unity of Isa. 60:1-63:6 is determined by the fact that structurally and in subject matter it is parallel to Isa. 34-35 (Isa. 60-62 parallel to 35: restoration of Jerusalem and the return of all scattered Jews from the Diaspora; 63:1-6 parallel to 34: YHWH's punishment of all the nations). The ethical dualism with ethnic character, that is, salvation of righteous Israel (60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a) and the obeisance/destruction of the nations (60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6) is the ground for arguing that this unit has used sapiential material. The re-use of older material and inner-textual exegesis are evidence of mantological exegesis.

a) Isaiah 60:1-22

Isaiah 60:1-3

¹ קומי אורי כי בא אורך וכבוד יהוה עליך זרח:

² כי־הנה החשך יכסה־ארץ וערפל לאמים

ועליך יזרח יהוה וכבודו עליך יראה:

³ והלכו גוים לאורך ומלכים לנגה זרחך:

(1) *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of YHWH has risen upon you.*

(2) *For behold (the) darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;*

but upon you YHWH will arise and upon you his glory will appear.

(3) *Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.*

The promise of salvation in Isa. 60-62 is focused on Jerusalem. It is this city which is addressed in the feminine imperatives of 60:1.

Vv. 1-3 announce YHWH's coming whereas Jerusalem stands radiant in the light of salvation, in the light of YHWH.

Similar brief summons to Zion to 'arise, shine' in the feminine imperative recall the following passages:

a) Isa. 51:17: *Rouse yourself, rouse yourself* התעוררי התעוררי *Stand up* קומי, *O Jerusalem, you who have drunk at the hand of YHWH the cup of his wrath, who have drunk to the dregs the bowl of staggering*, where Jerusalem is called to 'rouse' herself from the discomforts she suffers being in exile at the hands of the Babylonians (vv. 17-20) and she is promised that YHWH will bring the punishment to an end (vv. 21-23).

b) Isa. 52:1-2: (1) *Awake, awake* עורי עורי, *put on your strength, O Zion! Put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for the uncircumcised and the unclean shall enter you no more.* (2) *Shake yourself from the dust, rise up* קומי, *O captive Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter Zion!*, where once again *captive Zion/Jerusalem* is called to prepare herself for the restoration to her former status as the place of YHWH's favour (*the holy city*) without any more the presence of Babylonians who have defiled her, because her *bonds* are to be loosed.

The above summons, however, are set against the contrasting fate of that other female personification, 'the virgin daughter Babylon', whose fall from royal splendour to servitude is graphically depicted in an extended metaphor in Isa. 47:1-13.

The expression 'your light has come and the glory of YHWH has risen upon you' is found also in 58:10 where the rising of the light is a metaphor of the dawning of the new age of salvation; and the salvation in 58:10 is placed in a conditional framework of doing justice and righteousness (58:9b), and of social obligation (58:10a). Here in 60:1 the light is combined with 'the glory of YHWH'.

YHWH's coming among people is described with the salvific images of light and glory. 'Light' as a metaphor for the saving action of YHWH is used also in Isa. 9:1 (NRSV 2): *The people who walked in darkness have seen a*

great light אור; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light אור has shined, which is part of the promise of the birth of an heir to 'the house of David' who will bring salvation and greatness to Israel.

The expressions 'the glory of YHWH has risen upon you' (1β) and 'upon you YHWH will arise and upon you his glory will appear' ועליך יזרח יהוה וכבודו עליך יראה (v. 2b) seems to allude to Isa. 40:5: *Then the glory of YHWH shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of YHWH has spoken*, which, as part of a call speech for the preparation of a road across 'the wilderness' for the miraculous journey of the return of the exiles to Judah, declares that 'the glory of YHWH shall be revealed' and witnessed by 'all people', that is, all mankind (Whybray, 1975, 50).

The confident assurance, however, to Zion that her 'light has come', that is, 'the glory of YHWH' which is actually YHWH's own self upon Zion leaves the rest of the world in darkness (v. 2).

In v. 3 the theme of 'light' is combined with the theme of the 'coming of the nations' and their 'kings' to Jerusalem. Their coming to Jerusalem is because the 'light (YHWH)' 'has come' and 'risen' only 'upon' her (v.1).

The theme of the 'coming of the nations' and 'kings' because of YHWH's presence in Zion runs through chapter 60 (vv. 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16) and seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 2:2-3 (which is close parallel to Micah 4:1-3): (2) *In days to come the mountain of YHWH's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.* (3) *Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths'. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of YHWH from Jerusalem, which describes Zion's future establishment as the place of YHWH's rule over the world and the actions on the part of the nations who react to this establishment. The nations will come to learn YHWH's 'instructions' and 'word'. This instruction provides the principles of YHWH's unique*

‘judgement’ and ‘arbitration’ (v. 4) so that “a world-wide reign of peace will be inaugurated” (Clements, 1980, 41). The position of 2:2-5¹⁹ and 60:1-22²⁰ after the bleak situations described in 1:21-23²¹ and 59:1-15a²², and YHWH’s intervening act bringing salvation to the sinners who repent (1:27; 59:20), and wrath and recompense to his adversaries (1:24, 28; 59:18) is not fortuitous.

b) Isa. 55:5: *See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations גוֹי that do not know you shall run to you אֵלֶיךָ יְרוּצוּ, because of YHWH your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you פָּאֵרָךְ*, where Israel is given the promise that ‘nations...shall run to’ her because ‘YHWH...has glorified’ her.

c) Isa. 49:7: *Thus says YHWH, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, ‘Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of YHWH, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you’,* where the consequences of the restoration promised to Israel in vv. 8-12 (according to Westermann, v. 7b should be considered after v. 12), with its emphasis on the miraculous preparation for the journey home, are stated. The ‘kings’ recognize not Israel’s “vitality and toughness” but “the faithfulness” of YHWH who, “when disaster overtook her, stood by her” (Westermann, 1969, 216).

In Isa. 60 the nations will also come to Zion for another reason: to bring their wealth to her (vv. 5-7, 16), to rebuild the city (vv. 10-16).

Isaiah 60:4

שְׂאֵי־סִבִּיב עֵינֶיךָ וְרֵאִי כֹל־מִקְבְּצוֹ בְּאוֹ־לְךָ
בְּנִיךָ מִרְחוֹק יָבֹאוּ וּבִנְתֶיךָ עַל־צָר תֵּאֱמָנָה:

¹⁹ That is, future establishment of Zion as the place of YHWH’s world rule, where the nations come acknowledging YHWH’s instruction and arbitration for the world peace.

²⁰ That is, restoration of Zion as place of YHWH’s presence, where the nations come to bring their wealth and rebuild the city.

²¹ That is, physical violence, perversion of justice.

²² That is, violence, perversion of justice, lying, moral offences, rupture in friendly relations.

Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you.

Your sons come from far away, and your daughters are carried (by nurses) on the hip.

The end of the Diaspora and the theme of the coming of Zion's sons and daughters is now described in v 4 (cf. v. 9bc) (Smith, 1995, 30).

The expression '*Lift up your eyes round about, and see; they all gather together, they come to you*' seems to allude to Isa. 49:18: *Lift up your eyes all around and see; they all gather, they come to you. As I live, says YHWH, you shall put all of them on like an ornament, and like a bride you shall bind them on*, which is part of Isa. 49:14-23, a promise of the rebuilding and repopulation of Zion by her people returning home from exile. However, Isa. 60:4 is an exact allusion to Isa. 35:10, although the wording is different: *And the ransomed פְּדוּיֵי of YHWH shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away*, where the return of all dispersed Israelites from the Diaspora, not simply the exiles from Babylon is promised.

The expression '*Your sons come from far away, and your daughters are carried (by nurses) on the hip*' seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 49:12: *Lo, these shall come from far away מִרְחֹק יבֹאוּ, and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Syene*, where the return home, not only of the exiles from Babylon, but of all the dispersed Israelites is promised.

b) Isa. 43:5b-6: (5b) *I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you*; (6) *I will say to the north, 'Give them up', and to the south, 'Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth'*, where, once again it is promised that YHWH will bring 'Jacob' and 'Israel' (43:1) home from exile.

c) Isa. 49:22-23: (22) *Thus says YHWH God: I will soon lift up my hand to the nations, and raise my signal to the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders*. (23) *Kings shall be your*

foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers. With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you, and lick the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I am YHWH; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame, where the promise that the dispersed Israelites will be gathered and return to uninhabited Jerusalem, with their former oppressors attending them as their slaves (v. 23) is given. Here the theme of bringing home of Israel with the protection of the nations (vv. 22-23a) is combined with the theme of their leaders' subjection because of YHWH's presence in her (23bc) (cf. Isa. 14:2: And the nations will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess the nations as male and female slaves in YHWH's land; they will take captive those who were their captors, and rule over those who oppressed them²³). The combination of these themes occurs also in 60:14.

In Isa. 60:4b the emphasis is on the completion of the return of all the people of YHWH to their land, not only the exiles from Babylon [by contrast with Westermann who believes that "the return of the exiles was still a matter of expectation" (1969, 358)].

Isaiah 60:5

אז תראי ונהרת ופחד ורחב לבבך

כי־יהפך עליך המון ים חיל גוים יבאו לך:

Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall be in awe and be expanded (with joy).

Because the abundance of the sea shall turn toward you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

V. 5a describes Zion's strong emotions at 'seeing' the gathering of the nations (vv. 3-4a) and her children (v. 4b).

The verb נהר 'to shine' is used metaphorically to describe the joy of Zion.

²³ Isa. 14:2 comes from the hand of Deutero-Isaiah (Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 1994, 166-167).

V. 5b (beginning with the particle כִּי) gives the reasons for the joy of Zion and enters into the description of the arrival of the wealth of the nations by land (vv. 6-7a) and by sea (v. 5b).

The expression '*the wealth of the nations shall come to you*' alludes to Isa. 45:14 although the vocabulary is different: *Thus says YHWH: The wealth יגיע of Egypt and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, tall of stature, shall come over to you and be yours, they shall follow you; they shall come over in chains and bow down to you אֵלֶיךָ ישתחווּ*. They will make supplication to you, saying, 'God is with you alone, and there is no other; there is no god besides him', where the same theme as in Isa. 60:3-16 occurs: the nations come (v. 3) with their wealth (vv. 5b, 6ab.cα, 7, 9bβ, 11bα, 13, 16a), appear in a subservient status (vv. 10a, 11bβ, 12, 14a), and confess the superiority of Israel's God (v. 6cβ: *they shall proclaim the praiseworthy deeds of YHWH*; 9aα: *For the coast-lands shall wait for me*; 9c: *for the name of YHWH, your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you*; 14b: *and they shall call you the City of YHWH, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel*).

Isaiah 60:6

שפעת גמלים תכסך בכרי מדין ועיפה

כלם משבא יבאו

זהב ולבונה ישאו ותהלל יהוה יבשרו:

*A multitude of camels shall cover you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.*

*They shall bring gold and frankincense, and proclaim the praiseworthy deeds of
YHWH.*

The caravans of camels '*bring gold and frankincense*' to Zion, '*and proclaim the praiseworthy deeds of YHWH*' (6c).

Isaiah 60:7

כל־צאן קדר יקבצו לך אילי נביות ישרתונך

יעלו על־רצון מזבחי ובית תפארתִי אפאר:

All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you.

They shall come for acceptance on my altar, and I will glorify the house of my honour.

With poetic imagery, v. 7 describes the sacrificial animals' coming, of their own accord, to 'minister to' Zion.

The expression 'They shall come for acceptance on my altar' יעלו על־רצון מזבחי (following 1QIsa^a and supported by LXX it should be corrected to: (לרצון על מזבחי) expresses the idea that these sacrifices will be proper and legitimate. The theme of the acceptance of the worship of the nations is mentioned here in epigrammatic manner (cf. Isa. 56:7c, 8; 66:23; 14:1b).

This is a prediction of the future, and leaves open the question whether the Temple was at this time rebuilt.

V. 7b β adds that YHWH 'will glorify' his 'house of honour'. It is still not clear whether the author means that the ruined Temple is to be rebuilt or the rebuilt Temple is to be glorified. However, it is difficult to imagine the speaker silent about this vital part of restoration if it were still in ruins. It has to be mentioned that he is not silent about the walls in v. 10. This historical problem, however, does not affect the central theme of the unit.

Isaiah 60:8

מי־אלה כעב תעופינה וכיונים אל־ארבתיהם:

Who are these that fly like a cloud, and like doves to their windows?

V. 8 turns to the scene of the 'ships' sailing along 'the coast-lands' and bringing the dispersed Israelites who return from the distant places (v. 9). The picture is described by means of the simile 'fly like a cloud'

כעב תעופינה, showing the swiftness of the ships, and 'like doves to their windows' כיונים אל-ארבתיהם, showing their white outspread sails.

Isaiah 60:9

כי-לי איים יקור ואניות תתשיש בראשנה
להביא בניך מרחוק כספם וזהבם אתם
לשם יהוה אלהיך ולקדוש ישראל כי פארך:

(a) *For the coast-lands shall wait for me, the ships of Tarshish first,*

(b) *to bring your sons from afar, their silver and gold with them,*

(c) *for the name of YHWH, your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you.*

The themes of the bringing by the nations of Zion's children from afar, already seen in v. 4, and of their wealth, seen in v. 5b, reappear in v. 9.

The expression 'For the coast-lands shall wait for me' (1QIsa^a) occurs in 51:5: *I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope*, where the certainty of the promised manifestation of YHWH's universal power is emphasized.

The expression 'for the name of YHWH, your God, and for the Holy One of Israel, because he has glorified you' occurs in Isa. 55:5b: *See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of YHWH your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you*, which promises the political domination of Israel as in the days of David and that other nations will be her servants (Whybray, 1975, 192).

Isaiah 60:10

ובנו בני-נכר חמתיך ומלכיהם ישרתונך
כי בקצפי הכיתיך וברצוני רחמתיך:

Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you.

Indeed, in my wrath, I smote you, but in my favour I have had mercy on you.

Foreigners are to participate in v. 10 in the rebuilding of the city.

The expression *'Foreigners shall build up your walls'* seems to allude to Isa. 45:13: *I have aroused Cyrus in righteousness, and I will make all his paths straight; he shall build my city and set my exiles free, not for price or reward, says YHWH of hosts, where Cyrus is chosen by YHWH as instrument for his acts of salvation of Israel.*

V. 10b (*Indeed, in my wrath, I smote you, but in my favour I have had mercy on you*) is a judgement and mercy theme and emphasizes the change of YHWH's purpose towards Israel *'in favour'*: the walls which were destroyed by foreigners in YHWH's *'wrath'* will now be rebuilt by them.

The theme of judgement and mercy seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 54:7-8: (7) *For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you.* (8) *In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says YHWH, your Redeemer, where Zion is addressed and assured by YHWH that the Exile in Babylon was a temporary and insignificant separation from him, because now 'with great compassion' he 'will gather' her.*

b) Isa. 14:1a: *But YHWH will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land; and aliens will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob,* which is an assurance regarding the restoration of Israel after the fall of Babylon which is described in Isa. 13:1-14:27 [13:2-22 describes Babylon's destruction, 14:1-2 spells out the implications of Babylon's fall for Israel, 14:3-23 is a taunt against the king of Babylon who serves as the representative of his empire, and 14:24-27 points out that the old promises to destroy Assyria will be applied to Babylon (Sweeney, 1988, 45-46)].

Isaiah 60:11

וּפְתָחוּ שַׁעֲרֵיךָ תָמִיד יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה לֹא יִסָּגְרוּ

לְהָבִיא אֵלֶיךָ חֵיל גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכֵיהֶם נְהוֹגִים:

*Your gates shall open continually, day and night they shall not be shut,
so that nations shall bring you wealth and their kings shall be led in procession.*

V. 11a continues from the promise that the ‘walls’ ‘shall’ be ‘built up’ (10a) (Westermann, 1969, 360).

The expression ‘*Your gates shall open continually, day and night they shall not be shut*’ seems to allude to Isa. 45:1: *Thus says YHWH to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him - and the gates shall not be closed*, where by the will of YHWH, doors were open and gates not shut, so that Cyrus could make his military conquests.

In Isa. 60:11, the gates are open to allow the wealth of the nations to be continually carried into Zion, and their kings ‘*led in procession*’. There is no reason to think that in 60:1-13 a necessarily voluntary response by the foreign nations and kings to the revelation of YHWH’s glory, or to their coming to Jerusalem, or to their servanthood to Israel is envisaged, as Westermann believes (1969, 359; cf. Emmerson, 1992, 56). It is noteworthy that the verb נָהַג is most often used in the context of the forcible exile of people or the removal of belongings (Gen. 31:26; Deut. 4:27; 28:37; 1 Sam. 23:5; 30:2, 20; Isa. 20:4; Job 24:3; Lam. 3:2) (Smith, 1995, 39).

Isaiah 60:12

כִּי־הָגוּי וְהַמְּלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעֲבֹדוּךָ יֵאָבְדוּ וְהָגוּיִם חָרֵב יִחָרְבוּ:

For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve you shall perish, and the nations will be completely laid waste.

Most commentators regard v. 12 as a secondary insertion which does not suit its context, since they see throughout chapter 60 a consistent picture: the nations are welcomed as witnesses of YHWH’s saving action and as participants in it (Westermann, 1969, 360; cf. Vermeylen, 1978, 474; Koenen, 1990, 152). Their role, however, is primarily as instruments of Israel’s restoration. Even if one discounts 60:12 as a later addition, the

threat of punishment for every ‘*nation and kingdom*’ which rejects this subordinate role in relation to the new Israel is not so far removed from verses 10-11 in tone (Whybray, 1975, 235), and it may well represent a correct interpretation of 60:11b developing and clarifying its meaning (Holmgren, 1974, 140). The inner-textual exegesis in 60:12 of 60:11b reflects a mantological exegesis (cf. Fishbane, 1985, 458, n. 1, 460).

The theme of obeisance of foreigners to the Israelites (role-reversal) (60:11b-12, 14) is found in the book of Isaiah in Isa. 41:11-13; 45:14, 49:7, 49:23b, 25-26, 51:22-23; 52:13-15; 54:15-17; and 14:2b.

Isa. 60:12-13 is an allusion, in epigrammatic manner, of a pattern found in Isa. 34 (vv. 1-4 constitute a threat of YHWH’s judgement upon all nations, vv. 5-17 contain the threat of a fierce judgement upon Edom, both threats described with hyperbolic imagery) and 35 which describes the restoration of Israel and Zion.

Isaiah 60:13

כבוד הלבנון אליך יבוא ברוש תדהר ותאשור יחדו
לפאר מקום מקדשי ומקום רגלי אכבד:

The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the plane, and the pine, all together,

to beautify my holy place, and I will glorify the place of my feet.

The restoration of the city is followed by the restoration of the Temple, by means of ‘*the glory of Lebanon*’ and the trees from the nations, used for its ‘*beautifying*’ (v. 13a.βα), and through the divine intervention in its glorification (v. 13b.β).

The expression ‘*the glory of Lebanon*’ seems to allude to Isa. 35:2: *it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of YHWH, the majesty of our God*, which is part of 35:1-10, a promise of future prosperity and security, and of the return to Zion of ‘*the ransomed of YHWH*’, that is, all dispersed Israelites from “the Diaspora, and not simply the Babylonian

exiles” (Clements, 1980, 275). Isa. 35:2 describes how the transformation of Judah from ‘wilderness’ and ‘dry land’ will take place by means of the forest of ‘Lebanon’ and the fertile regions of ‘Carmel and Sharon’.

The expression ‘*the cypress, the plane, and the pine, all together*’ seems to allude to Isa. 41:19: *I will put in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive; I will set in the desert the cypress, the plane and the pine together*, where ‘*the cypress, the plane, and the pine*’ are living trees whose growth is to transform the desert providing an oasis for YHWH’s people. In Isa. 60:13 it is not the desert which is to be transformed, in YHWH’s miraculous way, but the Temple (*my holy place, the place of my feet*).

Being in line with the previous eschatologies there is in 60:13 an approbation of the Temple worship (cf. 60:7: acceptance of the sacrificial worship of the nations; 56:2, 4-5, 6, 7; 58:13-14; 61:6; 62:9; 66:1-4, 21) (cf. Blenkinsopp, 1983, 247; Schramm, 1995, 143-147). This is opposed to Hanson’s allegation that Isaiah 60-62, being representative of the “programme of restoration written by a visionary group which has returned to Zion” (1975, 71), abhorred “the obsession with the minute details of the rebuilt temple”, “the tedious measurements of the dimensions of walls and gates” (1975, 73), and in general “existing structures” (1975, 71, n. 44). According to Hanson, the visionary programme “was written in conscious opposition to that originating with Ezekiel (chapters 40-48) and adopted by the hierocratic group led by the Zadokites” (1975, 71), that is, “the contemporary leaders of the present institutions who are dedicated to the preservation of those structures, and to the details involved in operating a cult” (1975, 71-72, n. 44).

Isaiah 60:14

והלכו אליך שהוה בני מעניך והשתחוו על-כפות רגליך
וקראו לך עיר יהוה ציון קדוש ישראל: [כל-מנאצריך]

The descendants of those who oppressed you shall come bending low to you,

and all who despised you shall bow down at the soles of your feet.

And they will call you the city of YHWH, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Contrary to Westermann who does not see any kind of punishment of the nations or of taking vengeance upon them (1969, 361), the theme in v. 14 is that of the foreigners making obeisance to the Israelites, particularly when the reference to kings and nations in vv. 11b β , 12, 16 is taken into consideration.

The ‘*descendants of those who oppressed*’ Israel ‘*shall come bending low*’ (14a) to her and acknowledging it as a holy place, ‘*the city of YHWH, Zion of the Holy One of Israel*’ (14b) (cf. Isa. 49:23b, 25-26; 2:9, 11, 17 particularly in terms of the depiction of the proud bowing down to the ground).

Vermeulen’s assertion that vv. 14-18, 21 refer no longer to pagan peoples, but to apostate Jews who oppress the faithful in Zion and his appeal to the use of the verb שָׁחַד ‘*to oppress*’ (v. 14a) as an indication of post-exilic attacks upon apostate Jews because of its use in other parts of the book of Isaiah (cf. 2:9, 17; 25:11-12; 26:5) (1978, 476, 477) seem implausible for the following reasons: a) 2:9, 17 refer in general terms to the proud and 25:11-12 clearly to Moab and not inner-community enemies; b) the oppression in v. 14 appears to be of the city itself and not of a group within it, and the statements in v. 18b seem to refer much more naturally to a city rather than a pious community; c) if inner-community tensions were in view in vv. 14-18, 21, we would not expect a statement such as ‘*As for your people, they will be all righteous*’ (60:21), but we might expect some direct reference to the opponents of the faithful (cf. 65:11-12) (Smith, 1995, 28).

60:1-21 envisage no division within the people. The people as a whole is the recipient of salvation (60:21) (Smith, 1995, 37). The commentators have failed to see that there is in 60:1-21 (and the whole 60:1-63:6) a distinctive advance beyond the ethical dualism of 59:1-21. The contrast is not between the wicked and righteous within Israel, but it is between the righteous Israel (60:21; cf. 61:3c: *They will be called oaks of righteousness, the*

planting of YHWH, 61:6a: but you shall be called the priests of YHWH, you shall be named ministers of our God; 62:12a: And they shall be called, 'The Holy people, the Redeemed of YHWH' and the (ungodly) nations (60:11b-12, 14; cf. 61:5; 63:1-6). The dualism is ethical with ethnic character (cf. Wisd. Sol. 16:16; 19:1: the idolaters of Egypt; 16:18: Babylon; Jubilees 23:24; 24:28; 24:29; 25:3; 16:20; 21:24; 7:34; 1QM 1:6; 18:2-3)²⁴.

Isaiah 60:15

תחת היותך עזובה ושנואה ואין עובר
ושמתיך לגאון עולם משוש דור ודור:

*Instead of your being forsaken and hated, with no one passing through,
I will set you an everlasting excellency, a joy generation to generation.*

V. 15 is a general statement about the divine intervention in the transformation of Jerusalem, from wretchedness to 'everlasting excellency', which is developed in vv. 17-22.

The expression 'being forsaken' *עזובה* personifying Zion as forsaken seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 49:14: *But Zion said, 'YHWH has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me'*, where Zion's complaint that YHWH is not willing or able to save her, is followed by YHWH's reassurance (v. 15) that she will be rebuilt (vv. 16-17), repopulated (v. 18), and 'crowded' with those who will return (vv. 19-20).

b) Isa. 54:6-7: (6) *For YHWH has called you like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, like the wife of a man's youth when she is cast off, says your God, (7) For a brief moment I abandoned you עזבתיך, but with great compassion I will gather you,* where YHWH declares that the separation between him and Zion because of the Babylonian exile, was not permanent and he will recall her once more to himself.

²⁴ J.G. Gammie, Spatial and Ethical Dualism, *JBL* 93 (1974), 376, 380 (cf. D. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic 200BC-AD100*, 1964, pp. 297-303).

In Isa. 60:15, however, Zion is not any more *'forsaken and hated, with no one passing through'*, that is, a devastated city, forsaken from the nations and not from YHWH.

The expression *'with no one passing through'* is a sign of a desolate land as in Isa. 34:10: *Night and day it shall not be quenched; its smoke shall go up forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; no one shall pass through it forever and ever*, where the coming destruction of Edom is described.

Isaiah 60:16

וִינָקָה חֶלֶב גּוֹיִם וְשָׂדֵה מַלְכִּים תִּינָקִי

וִידַעַת כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעַךְ וְגֹאֲלְךָ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב:

*You will suck the milk of the nations, you shall suck the breast of kings;
and you will know that I, YHWH, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the
Mighty One of Jacob.*

V. 16 supports the picture of Zion's benefit from the wealth of the nations, expressed in vv. 5b, 6ab.cα, 7, 9ab, 11bα, and 13 by means of the metaphorical image of an infant *'sucking the milk of the nations'* and *'the breast of kings'*.

The idea of Zion's sucking of the nations seems to allude to Isa. 49:23: *Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers.... Then you will know that I am YHWH; those who wait for me shall not be put to shame*, (see above comment on 60:4).

V. 16b (*you will know that I, YHWH, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob*) is a manifestation of YHWH's power on behalf of Israel and it is a quotation from Isa. 49:26b: (a) *I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh, and they shall be drunk with their own blood as with wine.* (b) *Then all flesh shall know that I am YHWH your Saviour, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob*, where YHWH declares that he is able to save Israel from the power of Babylon. Each of these names of YHWH are found in the following passages: 1:24 (*the Sovereign, YHWH of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel*), 41:14 (*your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel*), 43:3 (*I am YHWH your God, the Holy One*

of Israel, your Saviour), 45:21, 43:11 (I am YHWH, and besides me there is no saviour), 43:14 (your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel), 44:6, 44:24 (your Redeemer), 47:4 (our Redeemer - YHWH of hosts is his name - is the Holy One of Israel), 48:17 (your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel), 49:7 (the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One...the Holy One of Israel), 54:5 (the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer).

Isaiah 60:17

תחת הנחשת אביא זהב ותחת הברזל אביא כסף

ותחת העצים נחשת ותחת האבנים ברזל

ושמתי פקדתך שלום ונגשיך צדקה:

*Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver,
and instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron.*

I will appoint peace as your magistracy and righteousness as your lordship.

Vv. 17-22 constitute a more direct statement of what is implied in the preceding verses, that because of YHWH's saving presence Jerusalem will be glorified.

The building of Zion with precious metals reflects a wretched state of Israelites and their aspirations, and it symbolizes spiritual (freer and fairer life) as well as material worth (Westermann, 1969, 362).

The theme of the rebuilding of Zion with precious metals and stones alludes to Isa. 54:11-12, although the vocabulary differs: (11) *O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted, I am about to set your stones in antimony, and lay your foundations with sapphires.* (12) *I will make your pinnacles of rubies, your gates of jewels, and all your wall of precious stones,* which is part of an account of the glory of the new Jerusalem which is to be built and its protection by YHWH from all harm, 54:11-17. In 54:11-12 Zion is addressed as the devastated city which is to be built more glorious than before.

V. 17c is not off the subject of the aspirations for the new state of affairs in Zion. It describes the qualities of leadership to be realized in Zion in the coming new age, which will ensure righteousness and internal peace

in the society (cf. 56:9-12: denunciation of corrupt leaders; 58:1-59:15a: absence of social justice, moral offences, perversion of justice in law courts, and rapture in friendly relations).

The expression *'I will appoint peace as your magistracy and righteousness as your lordship'* seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:26: (26) *And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city*, which is an exact parallel to Isa. 60:17c.

b) Isa. 32:16-18: (16) *Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.* (17) *The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.* (18) *My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places*, where it is recognized that prosperity and peace without justice (60:17) is worthless for the future deliverance and well-being of Israel (Clements, 1980, 263-264).

c) Isa. 54:14: *In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you*, where the oppressed and deprived of her right Zion receives the promise of a quality of life full of "justice and righteousness" (BDB, p. 842, n. 1a) as a result of peace between her and her oppressors.

Isaiah 60:18

לא־ישמע עוד חמס בארצך שד ושבר בגבולֶיך

וקראת ישועה חומתיך ושעריך תהלה:

Violence shall no more be heard in your land, nor devastation and destruction within your borders.

You shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Renown.

Peace from internal and external enemies is promised in v. 18.

The expression *'Violence shall no more be heard in your land, nor devastation and destruction within your borders'* alludes to Isa. 54:15-17: (15) *If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you.* (16) *See it is I who have created the smith who blows the fire of coals, and produces a*

weapon fit for its purpose; I have also created the ravager to destroy. (17) (a) No weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper, (b) and you shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgement למשפט. (c) This is the heritage of the servants of YHWH and their vindication צדקתם from me, says YHWH, where the explanation why any attack on Zion can not succeed (v. 15) is given: both the smiths who produce weapons of war and the warriors who use them are under YHWH's control (16-17a). YHWH turns also to social life promising protection from false accusations in courts (v. 17b).

Isa. 60:17-18 is parallel to Isa. 54:11-17 a promise of the glory of Zion which is to be built with precious stones (54:11-12) or metals (60:17ab), in righteousness (54:14a; 60:17c) and in security and peace from incited enemies to fight her (54:14b-17a) or from violent actions within the city (60:18), and justice in the courts (54:17b).

V. 18b means that the 'walls' and 'gates' will offer protection and fame to Zion and, consequently, they may be properly named 'Salvation' and 'Renown'.

Isaiah 60:19-20

¹⁹ לא־יִהְיֶה־לְךָ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם

וּלְנֹגַהּ הַיָּרֵחַ לְא־יָאִיר לְךָ

וְהִי־לְךָ יְהוָה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ לְתַפְאֲרֶתְךָ:

²⁰ לֹא־יָבֹוא עוֹד שֶׁמֶשׁךָ וַיִּרְחֹךְ לֹא יֵאָסֶף

כִּי יְהוָה יִהְיֶה־לְךָ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם וְשָׁלְמוּ יָמֶי אֲבֻלְךָ:

(19) *The sun shall no longer be your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night^a.*

But YHWH will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

(20) *Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself.*

But YHWH will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning will be ended.

Textual notes:

(19)^a Insert הַלֵּילָה (cf. 1QIsa^a, LXX).

Westermann (1969, 364) and Whybray (1975, 237) have argued that vv. 19-20 interrupt the theme of the future security and prosperity of Jerusalem. On the contrary, without YHWH's ceaseless protection and presence (60:1-2: *your light has come, and the glory of YHWH has risen upon you..., upon you YHWH arises and upon you his glory appears*) Jerusalem will not be secure. By means of poetic hyperbole and imagery, YHWH is described, as Jerusalem's 'everlasting light' (vv. 19cα, 20bα) 'sun', and 'moon' which 'shall no more go down, nor...withdraw itself' (v. 20a).

The idea of YHWH's being 'light' for his people seems to allude to Isa. 2:5: *O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of YHWH*, which is an invitation to the readers and listeners to turn back to YHWH so that the world peace (v. 4) might be hastened in (Clements, 1980, 42).

The theme of 'glory' as YHWH's gift to Israel could be an allusion to Isa. 46:13: *I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off, and my salvation will not tarry; I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory*, where YHWH promises that he will imminently restore and beautify the now wretched Israel in exile.

The end of darkness will be the end of the 'days of mourning' שְׁלֹמוֹ יְמֵי אֲבֵלָה.

Isaiah 60:21

וְעַמְךָ כֻּלָּם צְדִיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
נִצֵּר מִטְעוֹ מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי לְהַתְּפָאֵר:

*As for your people, they will be all righteous, they will possess the land forever.
They are the shoot of his planting, the work of his hands, so that they may be glorified.*

In v. 21 it is affirmed that 'all' the people 'will be righteous' and 'they will possess the land'. This idea of 'possessing the land' has been expressed in Isa. 57:13 and 58:14. In contrast with Isa. 57:13 where heritage of the land is

proclaimed only to those who *'take refuge'* in YHWH (57:13), or those who observe the sabbath (58:13), in 60:21, the possess of the land is destined for all alike because all will be righteous. In the light of v. 18 where *'righteousness'* will be Zion's *'lordship'* (v. 17c) and *'violence shall no more be heard in'* her *'land, nor devastation and destruction within'* her *'borders'* (v. 18a), v. 21 means that *'righteousness'* will prevail among *'all'* Israelites and the abuses will be put to an end.

The glorification of the people by YHWH promised in 60:21 is distinguished from Isa. 44:23 and 49:3 where the glory is attributed to YHWH as a result of the restoration of his people.

Isaiah 60:22

הַקָּטָן יִהְיֶה לְאַלְף וְהַצָּעִיר לְגוֹי עֲצוּם

אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּעֵתָהּ אֶחְיֶשְׁנָה:

The least one shall become a clan, and the smallest one a mighty nation.

I am YHWH, at the proper time I will hasten it.

The theme of the blessing of a greatly increased population is necessary if Israel were to *'possess the land'* (v. 21) (Whybray, p. 238). It could be an allusion to Isa. 49:19-21: (19) *Surely your waste and your desolate places and your devastated land - surely now you will be too crowded for your inhabitants, and those who swallowed you up will be far away.* (20) *The children born in the time of your bereavement will yet say in your hearing: 'The place is too crowded for me; make room for me to settle'.* (21) *Then you will say in your heart, 'Who has borne me these? I was bereaved and barren, exiled and put away - so who has reared? I was left all alone - where then have these come from?',* which expresses Zion's astonishment at the number of the returning Israelites who are not only the descendants of the exiles in Babylon but the dispersed Israelites gathered from many countries.

V. 22b brings to an end the promise, by means of the formula *'I am YHWH'*, which is familiar to Isa. 40-55 (41:4, 17; 42:6, 8; 45:5, 6, 7, 8,

18, 19, 21), and assures that the divine will will fulfil the promise without delay (*at the proper time I will hasten it*).

In structure and in subject matter Isa. 60:1-22 as a promise of restoration of Zion, the sole centre of YHWH's presence (*light, glory, name*) [who establishes righteousness, security and peace from violent actions within society (cf. 59:1-21)], and where the nations come to bring their wealth and to rebuild the city (and to praise YHWH's glory) is parallel to Isa. 2:2-5 which is a promise of future establishment of Zion as the place of YHWH's world rule, where the nations come acknowledging YHWH's instruction which provide the principles of judgement and arbitration for a world peace.

Moreover, Isa. 60:17-18 the promise of the rebuilding of Zion with precious metals (60:17ab), in righteousness (60:17c), and in security and peace from violent actions in the society (60:18) is parallel to Isa. 54:11-17, a promise of the glory of Zion which is to be built with precious stones (54:11-12), in righteousness (54:14a), in security and peace from enemies incited to fight her (54:14b-17a), and having justice in the courts (54:17b).

b) Isaiah 61:1-3

Isaiah 61:1-3

¹ רוח אדני יהוה עלי יען משח יהוה אתי
 לבשר ענוים שלחני לחבש לנשברי-לב
 לקרא לשבויים דרור ולאסורים פקח-קוח:
² לקרא שנת-רצון ליהוה ויום נקם לאלהינו
 לנחם כל-אבלים:

³ לשום לאבלי ציון לתת להם פאר תחת אפר
 שמן ששון תחת אבל מעטה תהלה תחת רוח כהה

וקרא להם אילי הצדק מטע יהוה להתפאר:

(1) *The spirit of the Lord YHWH is upon me, because YHWH has anointed me; He has sent me to preach good tidings to the afflicted/poor, to bind up the broken-hearted;*

to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening to those who are bound (the prisoners),

(2) *to proclaim the year of YHWH's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God,*

to comfort all who mourn,

(3) *to provide for those who mourn in Zion; to give them ornament instead of ashes,*

the oil of joy instead of mourning, a mantle of renown (renown as a mantle) instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, that he may be glorified.

Isa. 61:1-11 is concerned with the restoration of the people's feelings of dejection (caused by the injustice in Zion and the position of Israel over against the foreign nations) in the light of YHWH's intervention. The themes of 61:1-3 are consistent with the themes of the whole structural unit, 60:1-63:6, whose focus is on the eschatological future of Israel (city Jerusalem and her people) in comparison with the foreign nations' one.

61:1-3 has been understood: a) as descriptive of (the disciple of Second Isaiah) Third Isaiah's task (Westermann, 1969, 366; Koenen, 1990, 109; Lau, 1994, 67); b) as applied to the community of visionary leaders, who collectively interpret the commission of the Servant of Isaiah 40-55 to legitimate the programme of restoration developed in Isaiah 60-62; the visionaries understood themselves to be the new servants of YHWH in whom the prophetic office lived on (Hanson, 1975, 66); c) as applied to the community of the faithful who respond to the statement made in 60:1 that '*the glory of YHWH has risen upon you*'. It is thus the result of a "re-reading" of 60:1-11, 13 (Vermeulen, 1978, 478-481).

According to Beuken, the person speaking not only works as the Servant, but through his service, he also passes his resemblance to the Servant onto ‘*those who mourn*’. His task is identified with the task of the Servant in Isaiah 40-55 (Isa. 42:7; 49:8-9; 50:4), but also with the Herald of good Tidings (Isa. 40:9; 41:27; 52:7) (Beuken, 1989b, 418). However, such statements about what the Servant has experienced in his relationship with YHWH as his ‘*labouring in vain*’ (49:1-6), his confidence in YHWH and his justification (50:4-5, 7-9), and such characteristics of the Servant as his humility (50:6) and his suffering (53) are entirely lacking in 61:1-3.

In my view the speaker’s claim in 61:1 is to state the spontaneity of his inspiration and the source of his message (*The spirit of the Lord YHWH is upon me, because YHWH has anointed me*).

The expression רוח אדני יהוה עלי ‘*The spirit of the Lord YHWH is upon me*’ is similar to the one in 59:21 (*And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says YHWH: my spirit that is upon you and my words, that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your children, or from the mouth of your children’s children, says YHWH, from now on and for ever*) and it could be an allusion to the following passages, some of them noted by the scholars, but not elaborated by them:

a) Isa. 11:2: *The spirit of YHWH רוח יהוה shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHWH*, where the special gifts (*The spirit of YHWH*), which the new king would have, “appropriate to his office, in politics, the conduct of war and the administration of justice” (Clements, 1980, 122) are described.

b) Isa. 42:1 (cf. Beuken, 1989b, 415; idem, 1990, 71; Lau, 1994, 69): *Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him רוחי עליו; he will bring forth justice to the nations, where the ‘servant’ of YHWH receives the special gift of YHWH’s spirit to ‘bring forth justice to the nations’* (v. 3: *he will faithfully bring forth justice*, v. 4: *until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching*), that is,

“YHWH’s sovereign universal rule or order, which will mean salvation for Israel but submission for the other nations” in the view of Whybray (1975, 72).

In Isa. 61:1, however, YHWH’s utterance that He has chosen the speaker is missing.

c) Isa. 48:16 (cf. Beuken, 1989b, 415): *Draw near to me, hear this! From the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there. And now the Lord God has sent me and his spirit* אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה שְׁלַחֲנִי וְרוּחוֹ, which, as part of 48:14-16, referring to the Persian king Cyrus’ mission (v. 14: *he shall perform his purpose on Babylon, and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans*), declares that YHWH is present throughout Israel’s history (*from the beginning...I have been there*). The ‘spirit’ of YHWH is sent together with the person of the speaker, who is giving his credentials for the fulfilment of his prophecy.

The expression ‘YHWH has anointed מָשַׁח me’ seems to allude to Isa. 45:1 (cf. Whybray, 1975, 240): *Thus says YHWH to his anointed מְשִׁיחוֹ, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him - and the gates shall not be closed*, which is part of an oracle concerning Cyrus (Isa. 44:24-45:7) and the role he is expected to play as YHWH’s ‘anointed’, that is, as YHWH’s chosen instrument to ‘rebuild’ ‘Jerusalem’ and to ‘lay the foundation’ of ‘the temple’ (44:28).

In Isa. 61:1 the speaker gives credentials to himself, by means of the metaphorical use of the word ‘anointing’. He speaks in full conviction that he is commissioned for a specific task (Whybray, p. 241), chosen, empowered, and moved by His Spirit, since anointing was an obvious and vivid sign of the gift of YHWH’s spirit (2 Sam. 23:1-7, 1 Sam. 16:13) (Westermann, 1969, 365).

The specific task of the speaker is given in vv. 1bc-3 (*to preach good tidings to the afflicted/poor, to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening to those who are bound (the prisoners)...to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion...*).

The same language is used by Isaiah 40-55 of the exiles' release from Babylon (40:1: *comfort, O comfort my people, says your God*, 41:17: *poor and needy*, 42:7: *to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness*, 49:9: *saying to the prisoners, 'Come out'*, 49:13: *YHWH has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones*, 49:24-25: *the captives of a tyrant...the captives of the mighty shall be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued...*, 51:3: *For YHWH will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places...*, 51:12: *I, I am he who comforts you...*, 51:21: *wounded/humbled*, 52:2: *shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter Zion*, 52:9: *...YHWH has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem*, 54:11: *O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted...*), but it refers here to a more general release from the economic difficulties and injustices (a theme found already in the anthology in Isa. 58-59) inflicted not by foreign enemies but through injustices perpetrated within the Jewish community itself (Beuken, 1989b, 418-419; cf. Westermann, 1969, 366). In 61:1-3 Israel as a whole is given the assurance that YHWH will bring righteousness and justice in the community (v. 3c: *they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH*; cf. 60:21: *they will be all righteous*) (cf. a) 59:15b-20 where YHWH brings righteousness to the community described in 59:1-15a; b) 58:6-7 where the people as a whole (58:1-2) are told to take care of the poor and needy so that the promises of salvation may come to pass). 61:1-3, therefore, touches on the themes of the anthology in Isa. 58-59 whose focus is on the domination of righteousness in Israel. In Isa. 61 the 'righteous' Israel (61:3c; cf. 61:6a; 60:21; 62:12a) is contrasted with the nations (61:5-6; cf. 60:11b-12, 14) (ethical dualism-ethnic in character). The expression *בשר* 'to preach good tidings' seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 40:9 (cf. Westermann, 1969, 366; Whybray, 1975, 241; Watts, 1987, 302): *Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings מְבַשֵּׂרָת; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings מְבַשֵּׂרָת, lift it up,*

do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God', where 'Zion/Jerusalem' is pictured as YHWH's 'herald' and addressed to proclaim to the other 'cities of Judah' that YHWH has won a victory (v. 10) and now he is coming, carrying the exiles with him 'in his bosom' (v. 11).

b) Isa. 41:27 (cf. Whybray, 1975, 241): *I first have declared it to Zion, and I give to Jerusalem a herald of good tidings,*

and c) Isa. 52:7: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns',* which both speak about a masculine figure sent to Zion to announce YHWH's victory over Babylon which will set the exiles free.

In Isa. 58 among the pleas for social provision to those in need (constituting the form of fast that would be acceptable to YHWH) are the 'housing' of 'the homeless poor' people (58:7), the 'loosening' of 'the bonds of wickedness', the 'unfastening' of 'the thongs of the yoke', the rescue of the 'oppressed', the 'breaking' of 'every yoke' (58:6), the 'offering' of one's self 'to the hungry', the satisfaction of 'the desire of the afflicted' (58:10), and the 'removing' of interpersonal iniquities (58:9b) following an announcement of Israel's social injustices, such as the 'oppression' of the 'workers' and the physical violence (on the fast-day) (58:3-4).

In 61:1 the 'captives' and 'those who are bound (the prisoners)' are the victims of the perversion of justice and legal system (cf. Isa. 59:1-15a) (Beuken, 1989b, 422), and the 'afflicted/poor' are those who are deprived of their goods or money by unjust judicial action (61:8; cf. 58:7, 10) (Watts, 1987, 304).

The expression 'to proclaim the year of YHWH's favour' alludes to Isa. 49:8: *Thus says YHWH: In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages,* where YHWH promises to the exiles (the Servant in the view of Beuken, 1989b, 421) that he will repopulate

and restore their '*desolate*' land at the moment of His '*favour*' which will be '*a day of salvation*' for the exiles.

In Isa. 61:2 '*YHWH's favour*' is shown to those who '*mourn*' '*in Zion*' (2b, 3a) and is parallel to '*the day of vengeance of our God*'.

The expression '*the day of vengeance of our God*' seems to be an allusion to the following passages:

a) Isa. 34:8: *For YHWH has a day of vengeance, a year of vindication by Zion's cause* (or *of recompense by Zion's defender*), which, as a part of a threat of judgement by YHWH upon Edom, Isa. 34:5-17, promises '*vindication*' for Zion and punishment for Edom.

b) Isa. 35:4: *Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear!' Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you*', which is part of 35:1-10, a promise of future prosperity and security, and of the return to Zion of all dispersed Israelites from the Diaspora (cf. Isa. 60:12-13 which is an allusion of the pattern found in Isa. 34 -judgement upon all nations including Edom- and Isa. 35 which describes the restoration of Israel and Zion. In 61:2 the community as a whole and not a group is given the promise that '*the day of vengeance*' of YHWH (with the use of force as 60:11b β -12, 14a and 63:1-6 describe) will come for the foreign nations as it is obvious from the following verses (61:5-6) where the eschatological subservient status of the nations in relation to Israel is attested.

c) Isa. 47:3: *Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your shame shall be seen. I will take vengeance, and I will spare no one*, where Babylon is portrayed as a young woman who will be subjected to humiliation for the crimes against Zion. In 59:15b-16a YHWH sees that there is neither '*justice*' nor any person to intercede in the situation described in 59:1-15a (violence, perversion of justice, and moral corruption), and in 59:16b-17a he responds by acting with salvation which has a twofold aspect: deliverance (16b-17a) and punishment (*vengeance...and...zeal*) (17b). In Isa. 61:2 YHWH's '*vengeance*' is a) against the injustice within Israel with His ultimate goal to establish

righteousness in the community as a whole (cf. 61:3c: *They will be called oaks of righteousness*) (the same theme found in 59:16-17; 1:24), and b) against the nations (cf. 34:8; 35:4; 63:4) since their subservient status in relation to Israel is envisioned (61:5-6; cf. 60:10, 11b β , 12, 14a, 16a); the expectation of YHWH's punitive action against the nations is fulfilled in 63:1-6.

The strength and stability (symbolized by the tree *oak*) of righteousness within the people is taken for granted because YHWH is responsible for this: they are '*the planting of YHWH*'. As a result of the people's righteousness they are '*glorified*'. This is reminiscent of 60:21 and is distinguished from Isa. 44:23 and 49:3, where the glory is attributed to YHWH.

The pattern of giving of a new name (קרא ל), found in Isa. 58:12b, 60:14b, 62:2b, 62:4b, 62:12, describes in 61:3c α the transformation of the people into righteous ones.

The same pattern and the same theme occurs in Isa. 1:26: *And I will restore your judges as at the first, and your counsellors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness יקרא לך עיר הצדק, the faithful city*, where, after the replacement [by means of the reward by YHWH according to a person's deeds (salvation to those who repent and wrath/vengeance to His enemies-rebels and sinners) (1:19-20, 24-28)], of YHWH's enemies (1:24), the leaders of Jerusalem, by a more just and responsible group of '*counsellors*' and '*judges*', righteousness prevails among all the inhabitants in the city. However, in 61:2-3, the '*vengeance*' of YHWH, expressed as '*favour*' and '*comfort*' to all the community members '*who mourn in Zion*', brings righteousness (by the replacement of the leaders of Jerusalem already mentioned in 60:17c: *I will appoint peace as your magistracy and righteousness as your lordship*), and punitive action against the nations in 63:1-6).

In Isa. 60:15 there is a general statement about the transformation of Zion from wretchedness to '*everlasting excellency*' and '*a joy generation to*

generation', which has been developed in 60:17-22: the building of Zion with precious metals, the appointment of leaders who can affirm that peace (external and internal) and justice will be realized in Zion, the removal of violent actions within the city, YHWH's ceaseless protection and presence as her 'everlasting light', 'sun', and 'moon', 'righteousness' will prevail among 'all' Israelites, 'the possession of the land', and the great increase of population (see above).

In 61:3 the transformation of the feelings of dejection of Zion's inhabitants is stated and described by means of repetition of the *instead*.

The expression 'to give them ornament instead of ashes' (v. 3a) means that instead of distress and sorrow they will be given joy (cf. 61:3b: 'the oil of joy שֶׁשׁוֹן instead of mourning'; 61:7 'they shall have everlasting joy שְׂמִיחָה'; 61:2b-3aα: to comfort all who mourn,...those who mourn in Zion) (cf. 60:20: Your days of mourning shall be ended).

The expression מַעֲטָה תְּהִלָּה 'a mantle of renown (renown as a mantle)' is similar to Isa. 60:18b, where the whole city, enclosed within its 'walls' and 'gates', will experience protection (salvation) and 'renown', after the building of Zion with precious metals (v. 17ab), in righteousness (v. 17c), in security and peace from violent actions within the city and from external enemies (v. 18a).

In Isa. 61:3 the 'renown' is offered instead of רוּחַ כָּהָה 'a faint spirit' that is, a crushed and discontented feeling.

Isaiah 61:4

וּבְנוּ חֲרָבוֹת עוֹלָם שְׂמִמּוֹת רֵאשִׁימָה יִקְוִימוּ

וְחִדְּשׁוּ עָרֵי חָרָב שְׂמִמּוֹת דּוֹר וָדוֹר:

They shall build up the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolate places, and they shall repair the cities of desolation, the desolations of many generations.

Vv. 4-11 describe how, and in what, the ‘*comfort*’ promised in vv. 1b-3 to Zion’s inhabitants is effected. It is brought about by the rebuilding of the city (v. 4) and the restoration of her honour (vv. 9, 11).

Verse 4 repeats the promise of Isa. 58:12 (*Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you will raise up the foundations of many generations, and you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths in which to dwell*).

Isa. 58:10b-12 is a promise of salvation and announces the results of the conditional statements of 58:9b-10a (reinterpretation of fasting in terms of moral behaviour and social justice). The promise of rebuilding in 58:12 is linked up syntactically with the condition that Israel listen to the exhortations for moral behaviour and social justice, that is to say, for doing righteousness. The intrinsic connection between righteousness (*oaks of righteousness*) and the rebuilding of the ruined land is also found in Isa. 61:3c-4a (cf. Beuken, 1989b, 425-426).

However, in 58:12 the people as a whole are promised the rebuilding of the ‘*ancient ruins*’ conditionally, whereas in 61:3c-4a the promise is given to the people as a whole unconditionally and as the result of YHWH’s sole activity.

Isaiah 61:5-6

⁵ועמדו זרים ורעו צאנכם ובני נכת אכריכם וכרמיכם:

⁶ואתם כהני יהוה תקראו משרתי אלהינו יאמר לכם

חיל גוים תאכלו ובכבודם תתימרו:

(5) *Strangers (foreigners) shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall be your ploughmen and vinedressers;*

(6) *but you shall be called the priests of YHWH, you shall be named ministers of our God.*

You shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory.

With a sudden change from speaking about the Israelites to speaking directly to them, v. 5 contains the same suggestion of the subjection of foreigners found in Isaiah 60. In chapter 60 the foreigners come to Zion

because of YHWH's presence in her (vv. 3, 9c, 14, 15, 16), bring back the dispersed Israelites (vv. 4, 9a.b α), provide wealth and animals for sacrifice (vv. 5b, 6a.b.c α , 7, 9b β , 11b α , 13, 16a) and assist in the rebuilding of Zion (vv. 10a) not necessarily of their own accord as it is obvious in 60:11b β , 12, 14a (cf. 63:1-6).

Isa. 61:5 expands 60:10a β (*their kings shall minister to you*). Foreigners undertake even Israel's manual work, supplying their daily needs by performing the traditional tasks of the Israelitic shepherd, 'ploughman', and 'vinedresser', because the Israelites are to be 'priests of YHWH' (v. 6).

Israel functions as an elect people, as "spiritual leaders" (Westermann, 1969, 370) (cf. v. 3c: *oaks of righteousness*). That all Israelites are to be called 'priests' does not mean that they are to be occupied with ceremonial duties. The term 'priests' is parallel to the more general term 'ministers', and as in Israel the priests are released from ordinary toil to concentrate on priestly functions, so here the priesthood of Israel is seen as "a privileged status" while the foreign nations will supply them with their needs (*You shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory*) (Whybray, p. 243) (ethical dualism-ethnic in character) (cf. 61:3c).

Isaiah 61:7

תחת בשתכם משנה וכלמה ירנו חלקם

לכן בארצם משנה יירשו שמחת עולם תהיה להם:

Instead of your shame, a double portion, and (instead of) ignominy they shall rejoice in their portion (of land).

Therefore they will possess in their land a double portion, they will have everlasting joy.

V. 7 is linked to v. 6 (*you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory*) and elaborates the promise of giving 'the oil of joy' in v. 3b α . The *afflicted/poor, broken-hearted, captives, prisoners* (v. 1), and 'mourners' (v. 2) will not possess the land but 'double' 'joy' in 'their land', Zion, after the rebuilding of the city (v. 4), and their transformation into righteous

people (*oaks of righteousness*) (v. 3c), and ‘*priests of YHWH*’ (6a), that is, “spiritual leaders” (Westermann, p. 370), being released by foreigners from manual work and enjoying ‘*the wealth of the nations*’ and ‘*glorying*’ ‘*in their riches*’ (v. 6b).

This is justified by the structure of the verse. In v. 7a ‘*shame*’ and ‘*ignominy*’ stand in parallel contrast to ‘*double portion*’ and ‘*rejoicing in their portion of (land)*’ respectively. V. 7b, by the repetition of the concepts ‘*double portion*’ and ‘*rejoicing*’, equates the ‘*everlasting joy*’ with the ‘*double portion in their land*’, delineating the quantity, time-length of ‘*joy*’ and the place in which the joy will be experienced.

Isaiah 61:8

כי אני יהוה אהב משפט שנא גזל בעולה

ונתתי פעלתם באמת וברית עולם אכרות להם:

For I, YHWH, love justice, I hate robbery with burnt offering^a (or I hate robbery by injustice^b).

I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Textual notes:

(8)^{ab} MT reads עולה *burnt offering*. A few manuscripts and LXX read עולה *injustice*. In my view the author uses a play-on-words on purpose. Both meanings are possible because both concepts (*robbery with burnt offering/ robbery by injustice*) are found in the other anthologies.

V. 8a might be a hint,

a) on the one hand, at YHWH’s opposition to the cultic observances (here sacrifice: *burnt offering* עולה) followed by unjust behaviour (*robbery*)²⁵,

²⁵ The reinterpretation of cultic observances in terms of moral behaviour and social justice is found in Isa. 66:3aa, 1:10-11 (sacrifice); 56:2, 58:13 (sabbath); 58:3-12 (fasting) and it reflects wisdom influence.

and b) on the other hand, at YHWH's opposition to the corrupt legal system (accused elsewhere in Isa. 59:3b, 4a, 9a, 14) causing economic difficulties to the poor (*robbery by injustice* עוֹלָה, that is, unjust judicial action).

The practice of '*robbery by injustice*' which YHWH does not accept (שנא גזל עוֹלָה) and which caused the '*mourning*' of the '*afflicted/poor*' (vv. 1bc, 2b, 3a) is also found in the following passages:

a) Isa. 3:14: *YHWH enters into judgement with the elders and princes of his people: It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the spoil of the poor גזלת העני is in your houses, where the attitude of and policies of the leaders to oppress the poor, apparently by forms of extortion and abuse of the laws of debt are condemned.*

b) Isa. 10:1-2: (1) *Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees, who write oppressive statutes, (2) to turn aside the needy from justice להטות מדין דלים and to rob the poor of my people of their right משפט עניי עמי, that widows may be your spoil, and that you may make the orphans your prey, where the unjust rules formed by the upper classes of Jerusalem to deprive the 'poor' and weak citizens of their right and of their claim to land and property, are condemned.*

c) Isa. 5:8: *Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land, which refers to the joining together of houses and fields for the formation of large cultivated estates by absorbing neighbouring properties. This transfer of property which was worked out by the perversion of law (10:1) had caused the detriment of the poorer citizens (Clements, 1980, 62).*

V. 8a points, in epigrammatic manner, to situations within the Israelite society, not to the relationship with the nations as Whybray (1975, 244) and Westermann (1969, 370) believe.

In v. 8b Israel is to rely on the faithfulness of YHWH who will secure perfect justice (cf. 59:15b-18) and will grant to the '*afflicted/poor,...the broken-hearted,...the captives,...and...those who are bound (the prisoners)*', and

‘those who mourn’ (vv. 1-3) ‘their recompense’ and maintain Israel’s ‘everlasting joy’ by ‘everlasting covenant’.

Isaiah 61:9

וְנֹדַע בְּגוֹיִם זֶרַעַם וְצִאצְאֵיהֶם בְּתוֹךְ הָעַמִּים

כָּל־רְאִיֵּהֶם יִכְרֹמ כִּי הֵם זֶרַע בֵּרֶךְ יְהוָה:

Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples;

All who see them shall acknowledge with honour that they are a seed which YHWH has blessed.

In v. 9, which elaborates the promise of v. 3bβ: *renown as a mantle*, the foreigners will testify to Israel’s vindication, that is, their privileged status (*priests of YHWH*) (v. 6a), the prevalence of justice within the Israelite society after the intercession of YHWH (v. 3c: *oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH*, and v. 8), and the possession of the land by the people (vv. 4, 7).

The recognition of Israel, in v. 9b, as a ‘seed’ ‘blessed’ by ‘YHWH’ is at the same time an acknowledgement that YHWH revealed in and through Israel is the only God. This awareness reflects the same one as is shown in Isa. 60:14b (*and they shall call you the City of YHWH, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel*).

The expression ‘*holy seed*’ occurs in Isa. 6:13 (*Even if a tenth part remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains standing when it is felled. The holy seed זֶרַע קֹדֶשׁ is its stump*) but there is a considerable measure of agreement among recent studies that Isa. 6:12-13 has been added secondarily to the core of the chapter (Williamson, 1994, 35-36).

Isaiah 61:10

שׁוֹשׂ אֲשִׁישׁ בִּיהוָה תִּגְלַנְּפֶשִׁי בְּאַלְהֵי

כִּי הִלְבִּישָׁנִי בְּגָדֵי־יֵשַׁע מַעִיל צְדָקָה יַעֲטֵנִי

כחתן יכהן פאר וככלה תעדה כליה:

*I will greatly rejoice in YHWH, my soul shall exult in my God;
because he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me
with the robe of righteousness (deliverance),
as a bridegroom plays the priest with a turban, and as a bride decks herself
with her jewels.*

In vv. 10-11 Zion is presented to celebrate the fulfilment of her salvation by YHWH, described with images drawn from the joyful marriage ceremony.

Isaiah 61:11

כי כארץ תוציא צמחה וכגנה זרועיה תצמיח
כן אדני יהוה יצמיח צדקה ותהלה נגד כל-הגוים:

*For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in
it to spring up,
so the Lord YHWH will cause righteousness and renown to spring up before all
the nations.*

V. 11 gives an assurance of the reliability of YHWH's promises and alludes to Isa. 55:10-11 although the vocabulary is different (cf. Whybray, 1975, 246): (10) *For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, (11) so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it,* where the reliability of the promise of the return of the exiles to their own land (vv. 12-13) is demonstrated by means of the image of 'rain' and 'snow'. As the rain and snow are sent on earth without failing to achieve their purpose, so His 'word', spoken through his prophet, will not be prevented from its effective operation.

The idea that righteousness and salvation are conferred on men by means of the reproductive processes of nature (*as the earth brings forth its shoots, and*

as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up) alludes to Isa. 45:8 (cf. Whybray, 1975, 246): *Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may spring up, and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also; I, YHWH have created it.*

The nations, in 61:11, are presented to be observers and witnesses of the righteousness conferred upon YHWH's people and as a fruit of YHWH's sole activity (cf. v. 3c: *oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, that they may be glorified*, v. 9: *Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; All who see them shall acknowledge with honour that they are a seed which YHWH has blessed*, and 60:21: *as for your people, they will be all righteous, they will possess the land forever. They are the shoot of his planting, the work of his hands, so that they may be glorified*).

Isa. 61:1-11 expands features touched on in chapter 60: a) The end of mourning (caused by the injustices and by foreign destruction) in 60:20 becomes a dominant note in 61:2b-3ab, 7, 10, after the sole initiative of YHWH's intervention to effect righteousness (justice) in the community (61:2a, 3c, 8, 11). b) The theme of 'the shoot of' YHWH's 'planting' in 60:21 is expanded in 61:3c (*oaks of righteousness, planting of YHWH*), 61:9b (*a seed which YHWH has blessed*), 61:11 (*YHWH will cause righteousness and renown to spring up before all the nations*).

c) Isaiah 62:1-12

Isaiah 62:1

למען ציון לא אחשה ולמען ירושלם לא אשקוט

עד-יצא כנגה צדקה וישועתה כלפיד יבער:

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be inactive,

until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation like a burning torch.

Most commentators hold that a prophet is the speaker here and that it is the traditional role of prophet as intercessor on the community's behalf that is emphasized (Westermann, 1969, 374; Watts, 1987, 310; Koenen, 1990, 122-124). The alternative view that YHWH is the speaker (Whybray, 1975, 246; Vermeylen, 1978, 484; Steck, 1991c, 128, n. 50) rests upon the fact that the verb הָשִׁיב 'to keep silent' occurs a number of times with YHWH as subject (Isa. 42:14; 57:11; 64:11; 65:6)²⁶, though not exclusively so (62:1, 6)²⁷ (cf. Watts, 1987, 311). Hanson claims to recognize in 62:1, as he did in 61:1-3, the development of "the collective interpretation of the image of the servant (Isa. 40-55)", and "a phase of democratization where the office of prophecy...is broadened and applied to the entire community" (1975, 69).

In the light of the speaker's utterances in Isaiah 60, concerning the restoration of Zion and the coming of her 'sons and daughters' (60:4b, 9b α) and of the foreigners (60:5b, 6a.b.c α , 7, 9ab, 11b α , 13, 16), and Isaiah 61, concerning the restoration of the well-being of the community and the renown which 'springs up before all the nations' (61:3, 9a, 11b), Isaiah 62 is the work of the same speaker in 61:1-3 who affirms, using similar themes and vocabulary from chapters 60 and 61, his commitment to unremitting prayer on Zion's behalf (62:1a: *For Zion's sake I will not keep silent and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be inactive*) until the time when she is openly vindicated and glorified before the foreign nations (62:1b-2a, 7b, 10c, 12; cf. 60:14b; 61:3, 9, 11b), she is repopulated by her people (62:4b β .c β -5a, 10a; cf. 60:4b, 9b α), and she is secure from external enemy despoliation (62:8; cf. 60:11b β , 12, 14a, 18; 61:2a β , 5-6) by YHWH's saving intervention (62:2b, 4a.b α .c α , 5b, 7a, 8, 11). The speaker's intention is to reassure the people concerning the certainty and

²⁶ In these passages YHWH is portrayed as ending his silence and beginning his activity, whether for salvation (42:14; 64:11: hope) or for judgement (57:11; 65:6).

²⁷ In 62:1,6 the situation is different. The speaker (62:1) or the *watchmen* (62:6) will not be silent *until* יָבוֹא salvation appears, that is, until YHWH acts to transform Jerusalem's circumstances.

imminence of YHWH's saving intervention. The fact that YHWH is referred to in 62:2-5 and 6-7 in the third person and there is a quotation of his words in 62:8-9 supports this interpretation of the passage (cf. Smith, 1995, 34).

V. 1b (*her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation like a burning torch*) is similar to Isa. 58:8, where the saving action of YHWH is portrayed as 'light' 'breaking forth' at 'the dawn' (and to Isa. 58:10; 59:9; 60:1-3, 19) (cf. Sekine, 1989, 278; Koenen, 1990, 128).

Isaiah 62:2

וראו גוים צדקך וכל-מלכים כבודך
וקרא לך שם חדש אשר פי יהוה יקבנו:

The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory.

And you shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of YHWH will give.

In v. 2a, the idea of the nations as witnesses of Zion/Israel's 'vindication' and 'glory' corresponds to the hope expressed in 61:9. However, in 61:9 the nations will testify to Israel's privileged status (*priests of YHWH*) (61:6a), the prevalence of righteousness within the Israelite society after the intercession of YHWH (61:3c, 8), and Israel's 'blessing' by 'YHWH' (61:9; cf. 60:14: *and they will call you the city of YHWH, Zion of the Holy One of Israel*).

In 62:2b the 'vindication' and 'glory' of Zion is described by giving of 'a new name', which symbolizes a change in her status or condition (cf. Isa. 1:26; Jer. 33:16; Ezek. 48:35), and, since 'the mouth of YHWH will give' the name, means that He is responsible for the change of her status.

The new names (descriptive of the future) replaced by the old ones (descriptive of the present reality) are given in 62:4 and 12.

Isaiah 62:3

והיית עטרת תפארת ביד-יהוה וצנוף מלוכה בכף-אלהיך:

You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of YHWH, and a royal turban in the hand of your God.

In v. 3 Zion is depicted as ‘a crown of glory’ and ‘a royal turban’.

The terms **עטרה** ‘crown’ and **צנוף מלוכה** ‘royal turban’ reveal royal status and since they are combined with the references to her renaming (vv. 2b, 4, 12) and to marriage in verse 5, and since Zion does not receive the ‘crown’, rather she is the ‘crown’ and the ‘royal turban’ ‘in the hand of her God’ (v. 3), the solution of this paradox which has been provided by T. David Andersen (1986, 75-80) is the more plausible. According to Andersen, Zion is portrayed as taking part in a royal wedding, where YHWH, as officiator of the marriage, places her (as a crown and a royal turban) on the bridegroom’s head. The announcement of her renaming (v. 2b) and her actual renaming (v. 4a-bα) is the renaming of the bride associated with marriage and the fact that the new names of verse 4bβ.c make reference to being married, and to the delight of a bridegroom in a bride support this interpretation (Andersen, 1986, 78-79; cf. Koenen, 1990, 123).

The expressions ‘a crown of glory’ and ‘a royal turban’ seem to allude to Isa. 28:5: *In that day YHWH of hosts will be a garland of glory עטרת צבי, and a diadem of beauty צפירת תפארה, to the remnant of his people*, which is part of 28:1-6, a woe-oracle against the ‘drunkards’ of Ephraim (v. 1), that is, the political leaders of the Northern kingdom of Israel. A message of hope is given in 28:5, where YHWH is portrayed as ‘garland of glory’ and ‘a diadem of beauty’ to all the dispersed Jews who form the ‘remnant’ of both Judah and Israel (Clements, 1980, 226).

Isaiah 62:4-5

⁴ לא-יאמר לך עוד עזובה ולא-רצך לא-יאמר עוד שממה
כי לך יקרא חפצי-בה ולא-רצך בעולה
כי-חפץ יהוה בך וארצך תבעל:

כִּי־יִבְעַל בַּחֹר בַּתּוֹלָה יִבְעַלּוֹךְ בְּנִיךְ⁵
וּמִשׁוֹשׁ חֲתָן עַל־כֻּלָּהּ יִשֵּׁשׁ עֲלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

(4) *You shall no more be called Forsaken, and your land shall no more be called Desolate,*

but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married.

For YHWH delights in you, and your land shall be married.

(5) *For as a young man marries a virgin, so your sons shall marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.*

The new names are pronounced in v. 4, and are in contrast to those which describe the present condition of Zion. Zion is no longer ‘*Forsaken*’ (from YHWH) and ‘*Desolate*’ (a depopulated city), but YHWH’s ‘*Delight is in Her*’ (as vv. 4cα and 5b explain), and she is ‘*Married*’ to her ‘*sons*’ (as vv. 4cβ and 5a explain).

62:4aβ recalls and reverses the old threat in Isa. 1:7: *Your country lies desolate...it is desolate... .*

The personification of Zion as ‘*Forsaken*’ was used also in Isa. 60:15 (forsaken from the nations), 49:14 (forsaken from YHWH), 54:6-7 (forsaken wife from YHWH) (see above).

Marriage and family imagery with regard to Zion is found in Isa. 49:14-23 and 54:1-13 (compare Andersen, 1986, 79). The image of Zion as the mother of sons is found in Isa. 60:4,9 (cf. 49:17-23; 51:17-20; 54:1-2,13). In Isa. 54:6-9 Zion’s restoration is portrayed as a wife being reconciled to her husband YHWH.

In 62:5 Zion is not just a reconciled wife, she is like a ‘*virgin*’ ‘*bride*’. The image of ‘*sons*’ returning to their mother (cf. 60:4, 9; 49:22-23) and the image of Zion as bride (62:5) are combined in the idea of the sons, representing the returning people, being the bridegroom of Zion. It is the people then who receive the ‘*crown*’ in v. 3 by the officiator of the marriage, YHWH. However, in v. 5b YHWH ‘*rejoices*’ because Zion’s ‘*sons*’ return to her, which also means that He returns to Zion (cf. 60:1-2).

YHWH can be seen both as the *'bridegroom'*, who shows his love and joy to Zion, and as the officiator of the marriage, who causes the repopulation to take place (Andersen, 1986, 79, 80).

Isaiah 62:6-7

⁶ על-חומתיך ירושלם הפקדתי שמרים

כל-היום וכל-הלילה תמיד לא יחשו

⁷ המזכרים את-יהוה אל-דמי לכם:

ואל-תתנו דמי לו עד-יכונן

ועד-ישים את-ירושלם תהלה בארץ:

(6) *Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen,
all day and all night continually, they will not be silent.*

You who call upon YHWH keep not quiet.

(7) *and give him no rest, until he establishes-*

and until he makes Jerusalem a possessor of renown in the earth.

Commentators are divided on the question whether the 'I' of v. 6 is the prophet (Westermann, 1969, 377; Muilenburg, 1956, 717; Koenen, 1990, 124), or YHWH (Whybray, 1975, 246, 248-249; Vermeylen, 1978, 484; Steck, 1991c, 128, n. 50) or whether it represents "the leaders of the visionary group accounting for their commission to a prophetic task, that of witnessing on behalf of the people before YHWH until the restoration plan developed in chapters 60-62 is fulfilled" (Hanson, 1975, 69).

In my view, it is strange that YHWH should be portrayed as setting up watchmen in order to remind himself of what he should do. It is more likely that the speaker who was speaking in v. 1 (and in 61:1-4, according to Koenen, 1990, 127) also speaks in vv. 6-7 and takes upon himself the authority to appoint watchmen (cf. Smith, 1995, 35).

In Isa. 62:6-7 the theme of the *'watchmen'* is combined with the theme of returning of the people to Zion which is portrayed, metaphorically, as a marriage between her and her people (vv. 4-5). Thus, one part of the

function of the 'watchmen' 'set' 'upon' the 'walls' of 'Jerusalem' may be to stand sentry over the approach of the wedding procession, the returning of Zion's 'sons' (vv. 4-5) (Andersen, 1986, 80). The other part, which is given in verse 6bc is that they intercede incessantly (*all day and all night continually, they will not be silent*) with YHWH for Jerusalem reminding (*You who call upon YHWH keep not quiet*) Him to 'establish' and to 'make Jerusalem a possessor of renown in the earth' (v. 7), and they urge intercession until His promises to Jerusalem given in v. 8 are fulfilled (Emmerson, 1992, 77).

The expression 'Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have set watchmen', seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 21:6: (6) *For thus YHWH said to me: 'Go, post a lookout (watchman) מצפה, let him announce what he sees,* where the prophet is portrayed as a "city watchman who was responsible for keeping guard in order to give immediate knowledge of impending danger", here, warning the city of the fall of Babylon (21:9) after the attack of 'Elam' and 'Media' (21:2).

b) Isa. 21:11-12: (11) *The oracle concerning Dumah. One is calling to me from Seir, 'Sentinel שמר, what of the night? Sentinel שמר, what of the night? (12) The sentinel שמר says: 'Morning comes, and also the night. If you will inquire, inquire; come back again',* where the prophet, in a poetic and imaginative scene, asks when the period of Babylonian rule and oppression (*night*) will come to an end. The answer is, in metaphorical terms, that the period of Babylonian oppression, in the view of Clements (1980, 180-181), will soon be over, but another oppressor will appear (*morning comes, and also the night*).

The expression 'a possessor of renown in the earth' referring to Jerusalem is parallel to Isa. 60:18, where the 'walls' and 'gates' are named 'Salvation' and 'Renown', after the rebuilding of Zion with precious metals (60:17ab), in righteousness (60:17c), and in security and peace from violent actions within the city (60:18), offering protection and fame to Zion. In 61:11 YHWH causes 'righteousness' and 'renown' 'to spring up before all the nations' after his sole activity for the establishment of righteousness/justice in Zion (61:2a, 3c, 8, 11), Israel's privileged status (*priests of YHWH*) (6a), the

rebuilding of the ‘old ruins’ by Israel (61:4). In Isa. 62:7 Zion is the ‘possessor of renown in the earth’ as a consequence of the repopulation of the city (62:4-5) with the help of YHWH (vv. 4c, 7, 8).

Isaiah 62:8

נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּיָמִינוּ וּבְזְרוּעַ עֶזְו

אִם־אֶתֶן אֶת־דְּגַנְךָ עוֹד מֵאֵכֶל לְאִי־בֵיךְ

וְאִם־יִשְׁתּוּ בְנֵי־נֹכַר תִּירוֹשְׁךָ אֲשֶׁר יִגְעַת בּוֹ:

YHWH has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm:

‘I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies,

and foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have laboured.

V. 8 expresses YHWH’s answer to the intercession, promising, in the form of an oath (as he did in 5:9, 14:24, 45:23, 54:9), freedom to Zion from enemy despoliation (*I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies*) and freedom to eat the fruits of her labour (*foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have laboured*) and bring them to a joyous harvest thanksgiving (v. 9). This expectation of Zion’s independence and self-sufficiency is more modest than that expressed in 61:5 (*strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall be your ploughmen and vinedressers*) and 60:16a (*you will suck the milk of the nations, you shall suck the breast of kings*) (Whybray, 1975, 250).

Vermeylen thinks that 62:8-9 has interpreted the enemies of Jerusalem in terms of apostate Jews rather than foreigners (1978, 486). The references, however, in vv. 8-9 to the pillaging of the land seem to be much more applicable to invading foreigners rather than inner-community opponents.

The hostile attitude to the nations does not contradict the one found in chapters 60 (vv. 10, 11b β , 12, 14a, 16a) and 61 (vv. 5-6), contrary to Steck who regards the attitude to the nations found in chapters 60 and 61

as more positive comparing to the more hostile one in 62:8-9 [1989(1991g), 14-15, n. 25; 1991c, 124].

Isaiah 62:9

כי מאספיו יאכלהו והללו את־יהוה

ומקבציו ישתהו בחצרות קדשי:

*But these who garner it shall eat it and praise YHWH,
and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts'.*

V. 9 refers to the practice of bringing first-fruits of grain and wine to be offered in YHWH's sanctuary after harvest (Deut. 12:17-18; 14:22-27; 16:9-17). They were an offering of 'a holy praise to YHWH' (Lev. 19:24) (Whybray, 1975, 250).

'These who garner it' and 'those who gather it' (vv. 9aα, bα), that is, the inhabitants of Zion are joined in the worship of the Temple (they *shall eat it and praise YHWH*, they *shall drink it in my holy courts*) (v. 9aβ, bβ).

Isaiah 62:10

עברו עברו בשערים פנו דרך העם

סלו סלו המסלה סקלו מאבן

הרימו נס על־העמים:

*Go out, go out through the gates, prepare the way for the people.
Build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones,
lift up a sign over the peoples.*

In Isa. 62:10 the present inhabitants of Jerusalem (Whybray, 1975, 251; Koenen, 1990, 132) are addressed to 'go out through the gates' of their city to 'prepare the way for the people', that is, the dispersed Israelites from the Diaspora (the 'sons' of Zion in v. 5), and to 'lift up a sign' to show the way for them. The theme of the coming of the scattered Israel is picked up here from chapter 60 (vv. 4, 9bα).

The expression '*Go out, go out through the gates*' is reminiscent of Isa. 52:11 (Westermann, 1975, 379; Whybray, 1975, 251): *Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of it, purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels of YHWH*, where the Babylonian exiles are commanded to depart from Babylon.

The expression '*prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones*' seems to allude to Isa. 40:3: *A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of YHWH, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'*, where the 'way' and the 'highway' are to be understood as a road built to convey the returning exiles from Babylon to Palestine.

In 62:10 there is no basis for the narrowing of its significance to make it a highway for the return only of Babylonian exiles (Westermann, 1969, 379; Whybray, 1975, 251).

In Isa. 57:14: *It shall be said, 'Build up, build up, prepare the way, remove every obstruction from my people's way'*, the 'way' is a provision for the people. It refers not to a physical return to the homeland, but rather to the preparation of the community for its continued relationship with YHWH (see above).

Isaiah 62:11

הנה יהוה השמיע אל-קצה הארץ

אמרו לבת-ציון הנה ישעך בא

הנה שכרו אתו ופעלתו לפניו:

Behold, YHWH has proclaimed to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion, 'See your salvation comes;

his reward is with him, and his recompense before him'.

In v. 11 the speaker assures that Zion's 'vindication' (v. 1) and 'salvation' (vv. 1, 11b), that is, her repopulation by her 'people' (vv. 4-5, 10a) has been '*proclaimed to the end of the earth*' by YHWH and that '*his reward is with him, and his recompense before him*' that is, the fruit of His salvific action, the restored Jerusalem (Koenen, 1990, 135).

The expression *‘his reward is with him, and his recompense before him’* alludes to Isa. 40:10: *See, YHWH God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him*, where YHWH is portrayed as coming to rescue the returning exiles. However, in Isa. 62:11 the *‘reward’* and *‘recompense’* refer to the people who are portrayed metaphorically as if they are won back by YHWH in warfare. This implies that the return of the dispersed Israel is solely and entirely the work of YHWH, as it is shown from the metaphorical picture of YHWH (in vv. 3, 4, 5), as the officiator of the marriage (the repopulation of Zion), who causes this restoration to take place (cf. 60:1-2: *your light has come, and the glory of YHWH has risen upon you,...upon you YHWH arises and upon you his glory appears*).

Isaiah 62:12

וּקְרָאוּ לָהֶם עַם־הַקֹּדֶשׁ גְּאוּלֵּי יְהוָה

וּלְךָ יִקְרָא דְרוּשָׁה עִיר לֹא נֶעְזְבָה:

And they shall be called, ‘The Holy People, the Redeemed of YHWH’,

and you shall be called, ‘Cared for, A City Non Forsaken’.

When the dispersed Israelites come to Zion, Israel can be called *‘The Holy People, the Redeemed of YHWH’* (cf. 61:9: *a seed which YHWH has blessed*) and Zion is not a *‘Forsaken’ ‘City’* from people (cf. 60:15 where Zion is not any more forsaken from the nations).

Themes from Isaiah 60, such as, the coming of Zion’s *‘sons and daughters’* (60:4b, 9b α) and from Isaiah 61, such as, the renown of Israel which *‘springs up before all the nations’* (61:3, 9a, 11b), are resumed in Isaiah 62: the renown of Zion’s salvation before the foreign nations (62:1b-2a, 7b, 10c, 12) by YHWH’s saving intervention (62:2b, 4a.b α .c α , 5b, 7a, 8, 11) which causes her repopulation by her people (62:4b β .c β -5a, 10a).

d) Isaiah 63:1-6

Isaiah 63:1-6

¹ מי־זה בא מאדום חמוץ בגדים מבצרה
 זה הדור בלבושו צעה ברב כחו
 אני מדבר בצדקה רב להושיע:
² מדוע אדם ללבושך ובגדיך כדרך בגת:
³ פורה דרכתי לבדי ומעמים אין־איש אתי
 ואדרכם באפי וארמסם בחמתי
 ויז נצחם על־בגדי וכל־מלבושי אגאלתי:
⁴ כי יום נקם בלבי ושנת גאולי באה:
⁵ ואביט ואין עזר ואשתומם ואין סומך
 ותושע לי זרעי וחמתי היא סמכתני:
⁶ ואבוס עמים באפי ואשכרם בחמתי
 ואוריד לארץ נצחם:

(1) *Who is this that comes from Edom, in red garments from Bozrah?*

Who is this splendid in his robe bending from his abundant power?

It is I, speaking in truthfulness, mighty to save.

(2) *'Why the red colour of your clothes, and (why are) your garments like someone who treads the winepress?'*

(3) *'I have trodden the wine-press alone, and from the peoples no one was with me;*

I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath;

their blood spattered on my garments, and I have stained all my clothes.

(4) *For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption (or my redeemed ones) had come.*

(5) *And I looked but there was no helper. And I was appalled but there was no support.*

So my arm gave me victory, and my wrath sustained me,

(6) *when I trampled down peoples in my anger, and when I made them drunk in my wrath,*

and when I poured out their blood on the earth.

Most scholars take Isa. 63:1-6 as an independent unit (Hanson, 1975, 203; Whybray, 1975, 252) or “a later addition” because of its “apocalyptic nature” and therefore unrelated to Isaiah 60-62 (Westermann, 1969, 384; 305). In my view the material in Isa. 63:1-6 is related to the material in Isa. 60-62 and it should not be regarded as a separate unit from these chapters.

Isaiah 63:1-6 is a striking variation on the YHWH-as-warrior theme (Holmgren, 1974, 133-148) in which YHWH is portrayed as coming after executing judgement (which is as yet in the future) upon the nations (3ab, 6), blood-stained (*in red garments,...garments like someone who treads the winepress,...their blood spattered on my garments, and I have stained all my clothes...when I poured out their blood on the earth*) (vv. 1, 2, 3c, 6b) and bending ‘*from his abundant power*’ (v. 1b).

Throughout Isaiah 60-62 the nations are portrayed as subservient to Israel. Whybray has observed in chapters 60-62 “the note of nationalism-albeit of ‘religious nationalism’” (1975, 231; cf. Sekine, 1989, 72-74, who emphasizes the nationalism present in Isaiah 60). Westermann, on the contrary, has interpreted 60-62 as universalistic and has emphasized the freedom of the nations in coming to Jerusalem. According to him, “there is not any kind of punishment of the nations or of taking vengeance upon them” (1969, 361).

The role of the nations, however, in chapters 60-62 is primarily as instruments of Israel’s restoration: the foreigners bring back the dispersed Israelites (60:4, 9a.b α), provide wealth and animals for sacrifice (60:5b, 6a.b.c α , 7, 9b β , 11b α , 13, 16; 61:6), assist in the rebuilding of Zion (60:10a), they are threatened with punishment if they ‘*will not serve*’ Israel (60:11b β -12), and ‘*those who oppressed*’ and ‘*despised*’ Israel ‘*shall come bending low to*’ her and they ‘*shall bow down at the soles of her feet*’ (60:14a; cf. also the hostile outlook of 62:8: *I will not again give your grain to be food for*

your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have laboured). Further, foreigners undertake even Israel's manual work, supplying their daily needs by performing the traditional tasks of the Israelitic shepherd, 'ploughman' and 'vinedresser' (61:5, expanding 60:10a β : *their kings shall minister to you*). Finally, in 60:1-3 the intervention of YHWH described as light coming to Zion leaves the rest of the world in darkness (cf. 60:2: *for behold darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but upon you YHWH will arise and upon you his glory will appear*).

The above references indicate that the foreigners are not voluntarily subjected to Israel. According to Holmgren, "it is only against the background of the threat of destruction that we are to understand nations giving up their wealth, kings submitting to capture and foreigners enduring the humiliation of becoming second-class citizens, the servants of Israelites" (cf. Josh. 9:3ff.; 2 Sam. 8:9ff., Jer. 27:8-11) (Holmgren, 1974, 140, 142). In addition Isa. 63:1-6 is an anticipatory picture in detailed description of what YHWH swore to do for the deliverance of his people in 61:2a β : *the day of vengeance*, 62:8 (Holmgren, 1974, 141-142).

In conclusion, the ethical dualism with ethnic character, that is, salvation of righteous Israel (60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a) and the obeisance/destruction of the nations (60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6) which runs through 60:1-63:6 is one additional ground for arguing that 63:1-6 is related to the previous material (60-62).

YHWH is seen coming from Edom. The name Edom, according to some commentators takes over the role of a "symbolic" power opposing YHWH's purposes (Whybray, 1975, 252-253; Muilenburg, 1956, 726; Hanson, 1975, 206) and it becomes a type of the enemies of Israel, just as Babylon had been (Williamson, 1994, 175, 217). According to others, it is regarded as a symbol of apostate Jews within the community (Koenen, 1990, 76-87; Vermeylen, 1978, 489-491)²⁸. In my view the context of

²⁸ Schramm's view concerning who it is being judged in Isa. 63:1-6 is not clear. He states that "this oracle appears to take the traditional form of an oracle against the

63:1-6 is the destruction of the nations and Edom is a type of the enemies of Israel.

The theme of YHWH's coming *'from Edom, in red garments from Bozrah'* alludes to Isa. 34:5-6: (5) *When my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens, lo, it will descend upon Edom, upon the people I have doomed to judgement.* (6) *YHWH has a sword; it is sated with blood, it is gorged with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For YHWH has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom,* which, as a part of a threat of judgement by YHWH upon Edom, Isa. 34:5-17, describes the coming destruction of Edom and her chief city Bozrah, comparing it to a sacrificial slaughter. Isa. 34:1-4, a threat of YHWH's judgement upon all nations, prefaces 34:5-17.

The picture of YHWH as warrior who is *'mighty to save'* is similar to the one in Isa. 59:17 (YHWH intervenes as the sole saviour to bring justice in the society where violence, perversion of justice, and moral corruption dominate) and is frequent in the book of Isaiah:

a) Isa. 42:13, 49:25-26, 52:10 (see above the discussion on Isa. 59), where YHWH is portrayed fighting with the Babylonians so that the salvation of the exiles is to be achieved.

b) Isa. 1:24-26, where YHWH is fighting against the leaders of Jerusalem (see above the discussion of Isaiah 59:1-21)²⁹.

nations, the fact that it occurs in the context of Isaiah 56-66 argues against reading it in a traditional way" (1995, 149). The context of Isaiah 56-66 is, according to Schramm, an inner-community conflict (following Hanson). The opponents of Third Isaiah, however, were not the Babylonian גִּלְהָ (the Zadokite priests) but "traditional, syncretistic YHWHists, people whose religious practices had a long history in the (pre-exilic) kingdoms of Israel and Judah", that is, the people who remained behind in Judah during the Babylonian exile (1995, 181, 53-58). Since Schramm interprets Isaiah 56-66 as an inner-community struggle it is assumed that he believes that the latter group is being judged in Isa. 63:1-6.

²⁹ Cf. Isa. 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20 (NRSV 9:12, 17, 21); and 10:4 where YHWH punishes his people because of the internal decay of the nation: their leaders *'lead'* them *'astray'* (9:15(16)), they are *'godless,...evildoers'* (9:16(17)), murderers (5:7), drunkards (5:11, 22), poor citizens dispossessed of their properties and legal rights (5:8; 10:1-2), the processes of law are corrupted (5:23).

c) Isa. 14:26-27: (26) *This is the plan that is planned, concerning the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.* (27) *For YHWH of hosts has planned, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?* where YHWH's hand is 'stretched out over all the nations', following YHWH's intention to 'break' the Assyrians in Judah (v. 24-25).

In Isa. 63:1-6, however, YHWH's full wrath is directed against the nations (cf. Isa. 59:18 where there is a hint that 'he will render requital' to the 'coastlands' of the nations).

The expressions *ואדרכם באפי וארמסם בחמתי* 'I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath' (v. 3) and *ואבוס עמים באפי ואשכרם בחמתי* 'I trampled down peoples in my anger, and...I made them drunk in my wrath' (v. 6) seem to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 10:5, 25; 14:25; 30:27-28, 30-32 (against the Assyrians)

b) Isa. 13:9, 11, 13; 41:8-13; 43:14; 49:26 (against Babylon)

c) Isa. 26:20-21: (20) *Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until the wrath is past.* (21) *For YHWH comes out from his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no longer cover its slain,* which proclaim that in the day of YHWH all nations and peoples of the earth will suffer the just punishment of their sins.

d) Isa. 25:10: *For the hand of YHWH will rest on this mountain. The Moabites shall be trodden down in their place as straw is trodden down in a dung-pit,* which contrasts the ultimate salvation YHWH will bring to Israel with Moab which will be excluded from the coming final salvation. "The intensity of feeling against Moab after the Babylonian Exile represents an attitude" (Clements, 1980, 210) which could be the same as the one towards Edom (in 63:1), a type of the enemy of Israel, just as Babylon had been (Williamson, 1994, 217).

e) Isa. 29:5-8 which assures that all nations that threaten Jerusalem will be destroyed by YHWH, protecting Jerusalem and his people.

f) Isa. 34:2: *For YHWH is enraged קִצַּף against all the nations, and furious חַמָּה against all their hoards; he has doomed them הִחָרִימָם, has given them over for slaughter לַטֵּבַח*, where YHWH's anger against all nations is expressed. Isa. 63:3 is an exact allusion to Isa. 34:2 although the vocabulary is not the same.

Neither in Isa. 63:1-6 nor in 60-62 is there any specific foreign enemy. The theme of YHWH's anger against the Assyrians and Babylon is transformed in 63:1-6 and used for the eschatological destruction of all the nations.

The theme of YHWH-the-avenger in Isa. 63:4 (*the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption (or my redeemed ones) had come*) is found in Isa. 61:2a (*to proclaim the year of YHWH's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God*)³⁰. In both 61:2a and 63:4 the 'day of vengeance' stands in a position of parallel contrast to a year of YHWH's 'favour' (61:2a) and 'redemption' (63:4). This parallel contrast is similar to 59:17 where the 'garments of vengeance' are 'put on' together with the 'breastplate' of 'righteousness' and the 'helmet' of 'victory'. Isa. 59:17, 61:2a and 63:4 (alongside also with 63:1: *It is I, ...mighty to save*) bring the concept of vengeance into relationship with an aspect of YHWH's redemption. Vengeance is part of YHWH's act of deliverance (the destruction of the nations (in 63:1-6) takes place in order to ensure Israel's deliverance). This theme seems to allude to the following passages:

a) Isa. 1:21-26, 27-28 (see above Isa. 61) where YHWH's enemies are the leaders of Jerusalem (v. 26: *counsellors and judges*, v. 23: *princes*) and all the 'rebels' and 'sinners' from her inhabitants (vv. 28 and 21).

³⁰ In Isa. 61:2 YHWH's 'vengeance' is a) against the injustice within Israel with His ultimate goal to establish righteousness in the community as a whole (cf. 61:3c: *They will be called oaks of righteousness*) (the same theme found in 59:16-17; 1:24), and b) against the nations (cf. 34:8; 35:4; 63:4) since their subservient status in relation to Israel is envisioned (61:5-6; cf. 60:10, 11bβ, 12, 14a, 16a); the expectation of YHWH's punitive action against the nations is fulfilled in 63:1-6.

b) Isa. 35:4 (see above on Isa. 61).

c) Isa. 34:8 which is an exact parallel of 63:4, and d) Isa. 47:3 (see above on Isa. 61:2).

YHWH acts alone in salvation without human assistance (vv. 3: *alone,...no one was with Him*, 5: *there was no helper,...there was no support*). The same motif occurs in Isa. 59:16 (*When he saw that there was no one, he was appalled וישתומם that there was no one interposing. His own arm helped him וזרעו לו ותושע and his deliverance (righteousness) upheld him וצדקתו היא סמכתהו*). However, Isa. 59:1-15a is concerned with the miscarriage of justice within the community and in 59:15b-20 YHWH's active intervention to effect justice in the community is emphasized. In Isa. 63:1-6 YHWH intervenes to destroy foreign (nations) enemies of Israel.

In Isa. 40-55 the saving events are linked with the intervention of Cyrus to conquer Babylon (44:28-45:1). Isa. 60:1-63:6 links them with the direct intervention of YHWH (60:1-3, 19-21; 61:2a, 3c, 8, 11; 62:2b, 4a.b.α.α, 5b, 7a, 8, 11; 63:1-6). Although the speaker of Isa. 60:1-63:6 often re-iterated and re-affirmed the proclamation of Isa. 40-55, he also used it creatively as a starting-point for his own distinctive message and under mantological wisdom-influence he went beyond the work of his predecessor.

The hope for the future life (eschaton) of Israel lies on the sole intervention of YHWH to destroy the nations. This eschatological hope is found in the book of Isaiah in Isa. 24:1, 4-6, 21-23; 25:10; 26:20-21; 27:1; 29:5-8 which are regarded as later compositions than the material of Second Isaiah (Williamson, 1994, 180-187). In these passages and in 63:1-6 the oracles against Assyria and Babylon (14:26-27; 10:5, 25; 13:9, 11, 13; 14:25; 30:27-28, 30-32; 42:13; 43:14; 49:25-26, 29; 47:3; 52:10) are transformed into oracles against all the nations of the earth.

The close similarity between Isa. 34:1-17 and 63:1-6 (the names *Bozrah* and *Edom* in 34:5-6 and 63:1; *the day of vengeance* against all the nations in 34:8 and 63:4) and between Isa. 35 and 60-62 (restoration of Jerusalem and the return of all scattered Israelites from the Diaspora) leads to the conclusion that Isaiah 34-35 were added in the book of Isaiah by the scribe of chapters 56-66 to bind the whole book together.

The main focus of the third structural unit, Isa. 60:1-63:6, is Zion's transformation to a glorious city with the nations as instruments of the restoration with the use of force (60-62) and Israel's superior position (nations are destroyed: 60-62, 63:1-6) is emphasized (ethical dualism-ethnic in character).

1) The implications for mantological exegesis in the whole unit are the following:

a) Learned preoccupation with older prophecy and inner-textual exegesis:

Isa. 60:1-22:

- 60:1-2 (reinterpretation of 51:17, 52:1-2, 40:5), 19-20 (of Isa. 2:5 and 46:13): Announcement of the coming of YHWH's ceaseless protection and presence (described as '*everlasting light*', '*sun*', and '*moon*') in Jerusalem.
- 60:7b (cf. 66:23, 14:1b): acceptance of the worship of the nations.
- 60:3, 6cβ, 9c (cf. 2:2-3; 55:5; 49:7): the theme of the '*coming of the nations*' because of YHWH's presence in Zion.
- 60:4, 9bα; 62:10: the gathering of Zion's children from the nations (cf. 49:18; 35:10; 49:12; 43:5b-6; 49:22-23; 14:2a).
- 60:5b (cf. 45:14), 6a.b.cα, 7a, 9bβ, 11bα, 13 (cf. 35:2; 41:19), 16a; 61:6: the arrival in Jerusalem of the wealth of the nations.
- 60:10a, 13, 17ab (cf. 54:11-12); 61:4; 62:2, 7: the rebuilding of Jerusalem by foreigners and her glorification.

- 60:10b (of 54:7-8, 14:1a): the theme of YHWH's judgement and mercy towards Israel.
- 60:12, 14a, 17c-18 (cf. 54:14-17; 1:26; 32:16-18); 62:8: the internal and external security of Jerusalem and her people; cf. the theme of the nations' obeisance to the Israelites-role reversal motif (60:11b-12, 14//41:11-13; 45:14; 49:7; 49:23b, 25-26; 51:22-23; 52:13-15; 54:15-17; 14:2b).
- 60:22: increased population (of 49:19-21).

Isa. 61:1-11 focuses on the transformation of the people's feelings of dejection (caused by the injustice in Zion and the destroyed cities by foreign enemy action) and of their status compared to the foreigners' subjection, after the sole initiative of YHWH.

- 61:1bc-3: the specific task of the speaker is given by means of the same language used by Isa. 40-55 of the exiles' release from Babylon (reinterpretation of 40:1; 41:17; 42:7; 49:9; 49:13; 49:24-25; 51:3; 51:12; 51:21; 52:2; 52:9; 54:11) and refers here to a more general release from economic difficulties, injustices (61:8: *robbery* by unjust judicial action; cf. 3:14; 5:8; 10:1-2) perpetrated within the post-exilic Jewish community itself. 61:2a: *'the year of YHWH's favour and day of vengeance of our God'* (of 34:8; 35:4; 47:3).
- 61:2b-3ab, 7, 10 (inner-textual exegesis of 60:20): the end of mourning (caused by the injustices and by foreign destructive action).
- 61:3c, 9b, 11 (inner-textual exegesis of 60:21): the theme of YHWH's *'planting'*.
- 61:5 (*foreigners shall stand and feed your flocks,...shall be your ploughmen and vinedressers*) and 61:6b (*You shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory*) expand (inner-textual exegesis) 60:10aβ (*their kings shall minister to you*) while Israel functions as an elect people, as spiritual leaders with a privileged status (61:6a).

- 61:8: play on the words עֹלָה *burnt offering* (MT), and עוֹלָה *injustice* (*I hate robbery by injustice*: reapplication of Isa. 3:14; 5:8; 10:1-2).

Isa. 62:1-12:

- 62:4b β .c β -5a, 10a; 62:4a (inner-textual exegesis of 60:4b, 9b α): YHWH's imminent intervention causes Zion's repopulation by her people.
- 62:1b-2a, 7b, 10c, 12 (inner-textual exegesis of 61:3, 9a, 11b): Zion's renown before the foreign nations.
- 62:4 α (reinterpretation of Isa. 1:7): Zion no longer desolate.

Isa. 63:1-6:

- 63:1-6 (reinterpretation of the oracles against Assyria and Babylon, 14:26-27; 10:5, 25; 13:9, 11; 13:13; 14:25; 30:27-28, 30-32; 42:13; 43:14; 49:25-26; 47:3; 52:10): YHWH's sole intervention causes the destruction-punishment of the nations (cf. 34:1-17, an exact parallel of 63:1-6).

2) Wisdom themes:

Reinterpretation of sacrifice in terms of righteous behaviour (61:8 (MT): *I hate robbery with burnt offering*).

Ethical dualism with ethnic character: the contrast between the salvation of righteous Israel (60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a) and the obeisance/destruction of the nations (60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6).

4. Isaiah 63:7-65:25

The focus of the fourth structural unit, Isa. 63:7-65:26, is YHWH's answer containing accusation against those who practise illicit cults, promise of transformation of Jerusalem and her people into rejoicing, of peace from external enemies and of perfect communion with YHWH (65:1-25), after the people's lament for the withdrawal of YHWH's help in their distress because of their sins (63:7-64:11). The unity of 63:7-65:25 is determined by the fact that the same technique is found in the eschatologies of some apocalypses (4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Apocalypse of Abraham, 3 Baruch). In these works the answer to the lament for the present distress (destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 C.E.) contains broader issues of eschatological expectations for the restoration of Jerusalem and her people, the destiny of the righteous and wicked and of the nations. The eschatological destruction of the idolaters (65:6-7, 11-12, 13-14, 15a β , 25b) and the blessing of the righteous (65:8-10, 13-14, 15b, 16a, 18-24, 25a.c), that is, ethical dualism on cultic grounds, is one of the grounds for arguing that this unit has used sapiential material. The re-use of older material and inner-textual exegesis are evidence of mantological exegesis.

a) Isaiah 63:7-64:11

Isa. 63:7-64:11 is a community lament (Westermann, 1969, 386; Whybray, 1975, 255; Hanson, 1975, 86; Koenen, 1990, 157; Smith, 1995, 47; Schramm, 1995, 150) whose main theme is the withdrawal of YHWH's help, in their present distress (destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple as a result of enemy action ~ ethical corruption), from his people because of their sin. It is divided in the following main parts:

a) Isa. 63:7-14 is a recollection of YHWH's redemptive acts towards his people in the ancient past (exodus, wandering and conquest of the promised land) despite their sin (vv. 7-11a), and an appeal to YHWH for

renewing his help just like in the time of exodus (vv. 11bc-14). b) Isa. 63:15-19a contains the expression of the people's confidence in YHWH's intervention and help, their lament for lack of salvation and description of their present distress (YHWH permits sin so that they do 'not fear' Him (63:17) - the destruction of Jerusalem). c) Isa. 63:19b-64:4a is a plea for YHWH's intervention to save his people from the enemy nations and for the sake of the righteous and those who 'wait for him' (64:3). d) Isa. 64:4b-6 is a confession of sin. e) Isa. 64:7-11 is the final plea to YHWH for deliverance, including references to the people's present distress (estrangement between YHWH and his people because of their iniquity - ruined cities and Temple as a result of enemy action) (cf. Westermann, 1969, 387, 392, Whybray, 1975, 255; Koenen, 1990, 157-158).

Isaiah 63:7

חסדי יהוה אזכיר תהלת יהוה

כעל כל אשר-גמלנו יהוה ורב-טוב לבית ישראל

אשר-גמלם כרחמיו וכרב חסדיו:

I will mention the deeds of loving-kindness of YHWH, the praiseworthy acts of YHWH,

according to all that YHWH has done to us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel,

that he has done to them according to his compassion, and according to the abundance of his deeds of loving-kindness.

In Isa. 63:7-14 the recollection of YHWH's past saving act towards his people was the exodus and it is to the events of the exodus that the passage mainly alludes.

Isaiah 63:8a

ויאמר אך-עמי חמה בנים לא ישקרו

Then he said: 'Surely they are my people, sons who will not deal falsely'.

Isa. 63:8a contains the account of Israel's election (cf. Exod. 6:2-6).

The thought that Israel is the elected and chosen people of YHWH (*Surely they are my people*) is found in the book of Isaiah in the following passages:

- a) Isa. 14:1: *But YHWH will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land; and aliens will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.*
- b) Isa. 41:8-9: (8) *But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend; (9) you whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners, saying to you, 'You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off'.*
- c) Isa. 43:1, 10: (1) *But now thus says YHWH, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. (10) You are my witnesses, says YHWH, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.*
- d) Isa. 44:1: *But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen.*
- e) Isa. 49:7: *Thus says YHWH, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, 'Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of YHWH, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you'.*

Isaiah 63:8b-9

וַיְהִי לָהֶם לְמוֹשִׁיעַ: ^{8b}

בְּכָל־צָרָתָם ⁹

לֹא צָר וּמֵלָאךְ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵם

בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ וּבַחֲמִלְתּוֹ הוּא גֹאֲלֵם

וַיִּנְטֹלֵם וַיִּנְשָׂאֵם כָּל־יְמֵי עוֹלָם:

(8b) *So he became their saviour*

(9) (a) *in all their distress.*

(b) *He did not afflict and the angel of his presence saved them;*

(c) *in (by) his love and in (by) his compassion he redeemed them,*

(d) *and he bore them and carried them all the days of old.*

The result of Israel's election by YHWH, that is, the great acts of salvation in the exodus, is given in vv. 8b-9.

The expression *'he became their saviour in their distress'* alludes to Exod. 3:7-8: (7) *Then YHWH said, 'I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, (8) and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

The theme that YHWH saves his people *'in all their distress'* צרה seems to allude to the following passages:

- a) Isa. 33:2: *O YHWH, be gracious to us; we wait for you. Be our arm every morning, our salvation in the time of trouble בעת צרה,*
- b) Isa. 25:4: *For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress צר, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat,*
- c) Isa. 26:16: *O YHWH, in distress צר they sought you, they poured out a prayer when your chastening was on them (cf. Isa. 25:9; 33:22; 35:4; 38:20; 43:1, 3, 11, 12; 44:22-23; 45:15, 21; 48:20; 49:25, 26; 52:9, 60:16).*

They had afflictions in the wilderness journey, but not from YHWH (Watts, 1987, 332). YHWH personally intervened to save them without mediators.

The expression מלאך פניו *'the angel of His presence'* is unique in the book of Isaiah (cf. Deut. 4:37: *...He brought you out of Egypt with his own presence בפניו, by his great power; Exod. 33:14, 15 where Moses receives the assurance of YHWH's 'presence' פנה for the whole people). In Isa. 37:36 the expression 'the angel of YHWH' is used.*

The expression *'and he bore them וינטלם and carried them וינשאם all the days of old'* draws on Exod. 19:4: *You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you וינשא on eagles' wings and brought you to myself, and Deut. 1:31: and in the wilderness, where you saw how YHWH your God carried you נשאך, just as one*

carries **ישא** a child, all the way that you travelled until you reached this place, 32:11: (11) *As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up יקחָהוּ, and bears them aloft ישאָהוּ on its pinions, (12) YHWH alone guided him; no foreign god was with him.*

The same image of YHWH's 'carrying' Israel in the wilderness is recollected in the book of Isaiah in Isa. 46:3-4: (3) *Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from your birth, carried from the womb; (4) even to your old age I am he, even when you turn gray I will carry you אֶסְבֵּל. I have made, and I will bear אֲשֵׁא; I will carry אֶסְבֵּל and will save, where YHWH addresses Israel in a short promise of salvation relying on Israel's 'bearing' and 'carrying' by YHWH at the time of exodus, by contrast with the Babylonians who 'carry' their gods (idols) who 'cannot save' them (46:1-2).*

Isaiah 63:10

וְהִמָּה מָרוּ וְעִצְבוּ אֶת־רוּחַ קֹדֶשׁ
וַיִּהְיֶה לָהֶם לְאֹיֵב הוּא נִלְחָם־בָּם:

But they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit;

therefore he turned to be an enemy to them; he himself fought against them.

V. 10 does not say which rebellion is meant among the many of Israel's life in the wilderness [Exod. 15:22-26; 16:1-36; 17:1-7 where the murmuring of the people is followed by YHWH's merciful provision: water of Marah became sweet, Manna, water from the rock; Exod. 32:1-35 where the use of the golden calf and the people's punishment because of this sin are recorded; Numbers 13-14, 20:10, Deut. 1:26-2:16 where the refusal to enter the land, punished by YHWH's fighting against them as their enemy is recorded; Numb. 16 where Korah, Dathan, and Abiram 'took two hundred fifty Israelite men, leaders of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men, and they confronted Moses' (16:2)]. Whybray understands the rebellion in 63:10 to be general 'referring in general

terms to Israel's whole history of rebellion and its culmination in the disasters of the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests which are seen as due to YHWH's deliberate instigation' (1975, 258; cf. Hanson, 1975, 89).

Isaiah 63:11-14

¹¹ ויזכר ימי־עולם משה עמו

איה המעלם מים את רעי צאנו

איה השם בקרבו את־רוח קדשו:

¹² מוליך לימין משה זרוע תפארתו

בוקע מים מפניהם לעשות לו שם עולם:

¹³ מליכם בתהמות כסוס במדבר לא יכשלו:

¹⁴ כבהמה בבקעה תרד רוח יהוה תניחנו

כן נהגת עמך לעשות לך שם תפארת:

(11) *Then they (he) remembered the days of old, Him who drew out His people.*

Where is the one who brought them up out of the sea, the shepherds of his flock?

Where is the one who put in the midst of them his holy spirit,

(12) *who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses,*

who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name,

(13) *(where is the one) who led them through the abysses of the sea? Like a horse in the desert they would (do) not stumble.*

(14) *like cattle that go down into the valley, the spirit of YHWH gave them rest.*

Then you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.

V. 11a introduces the actual recitation of YHWH's saving acts (*they (he) remembered the days of old, Him who drew out His people*) in the time of exodus: YHWH 'brought up' His people 'out of the sea' (v. 11b), 'divided the waters before them' בוקע מים (v. 12b//Exod. 14:16, 14:21, 15:8, 16), and 'led them through the abysses of the sea' מליכם בתהמות (vv. 13, 14b//Exod. 14:22, 14:29, 15:19) with 'his holy spirit' (vv. 11c, 14a), and 'his glorious arm' (v. 12a//Exod. 6:6, 15:6, 12, 16; Deut. 4:34, 5:15, 7:19, 9:29, 11:2, 26:8). Vv. 11bα, 11cα introduce the appeal, by means of the questions

concerning the inactivity of YHWH (*where is the one...?*), to YHWH for renewing his help just like in the time of exodus.

The recollection and re-introduction of themes -here, the dividing of waters- taken from the Exodus story is found in the book of Isaiah in the following passages:

a) Isa. 10:24-27: (24) *Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: O my people, who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they beat you with a rod and lift up their staff against you as the Egyptians did.* (25) *For in every little while my indignation will come to an end, and my anger will be directed to their destruction.* (26) *YHWH of hosts will wield a whip against them, as when he struck Midian at the rock of Oreb; his staff will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt.* (27) *On that day his burden will be removed from your shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed from your neck,* where YHWH assures the people of Zion that the Assyrian domination will soon come to an end because YHWH's '*staff will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt*' (cf. Exod. 14:16).

b) Isa. 11:15-16 (Fishbane, 1979, 126-127, 128; idem, 1985, 355, 356): (15) *And YHWH will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt; and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching wind; and will split it into seven channels, and make a way to cross on foot;* (16) *so there shall be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that is left of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt,* which is part of 11:11-16, a promise for the return of '*the remnant*' of Israel from the Diaspora (Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Ethiopia, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and '*the coastlands of the sea*') to the land of Israel (v. 11). In vv. 11:15-16 the return of the dispersed Jews from Egypt and Assyria will be '*as it was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt*', when YHWH '*split*' the Nile '*with his scorching wind*', '*made a way to cross on foot*' and led Israel through it (cf. Exod. 14:21).

c) Isa. 43:16-17 (Fishbane, 1979, 133; idem, 1985, 364): (16) *Thus says YHWH, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters,* (17) *who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick,* which refers to the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites and the destruction of the Egyptian army and stands in

parallel contrast to the ‘new’ act of YHWH to come (the deliverance from Babylon, the New Exodus) which is described in similar language (vv. 18-21).

d) Isa. 50:2: *Why was no one there when I came? Why did no one answer when I called? Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? By my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a desert; their fish stink for lack of water, and die of thirst*, which with an oblique reference to YHWH’s great deeds at the time of Exodus the all-sufficiency of His power is stressed.

e) Isa. 51:10 (Fishbane, 1979, 135; idem, 1985, 364): *Was it not you who dried up the sea* *הַמַּחְרַבֶּת יָם*, *the waters of the great deep* *מִי תְהוֹם רַבָּה*; *who made the depths of the sea a way for the redeemed to cross over* *דֶּרֶךְ לַעֲבֹר גְּאוּלִּים* *הַשְּׁמָה*?, where the momentous event of the exodus, when YHWH ‘dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep’ in order to protect the redemption of the Israelites, is invoked by the prophet so that YHWH will again manifest his power for the sake of the Judaeans in the Babylonian exile.

The word *מָשָׁה* ‘to draw out’ (v. 11) is a play on the name Moses (Exod. 2:10) and refers to the ‘drawing out’ of Israel from the sea (Ed. Webster, 1990, 91, 102, n. 9; Fishbane, 1979, 138, 139).

The expression ‘the shepherds of his flock’ refers to all those leaders of the Exodus generation (Watts, 1987, 332) including Moses and Aaron. The emphasis in vv. 11-14 is on the recital of “the first redemption” (Fishbane, 1985, 364) at the exodus as the proof of YHWH’s power, and on the anticipation of “His historical compassion and concern” (Fishbane, 1979, 139) for the people’s present despair.

The role of Moses in vv. 11-14 is only secondary as it is obvious from the references (in vv. 7: *the deeds of loving-kindness of YHWH, the praiseworthy acts of YHWH*, 8: *he became their saviour*, 9: *the angel of his presence saved them...he redeemed them, and he bare and carried them all the days of old*, 11a: *Him who drew out His people*, 11b: *...the one who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock*, 11c: *his holy spirit*, 12: *his glorious arm*, 13: *(...the one) who led them*

through the abysses of the sea, 14: the spirit of YHWH gave them rest...you led your people...) to YHWH as the sole saviour at the exodus, in the wilderness, and the conquest of the promised land, supporting Moses by ‘*going at the right hand of Moses*’ (v. 12). The exalting of YHWH as the sole saviour rather than “the exalting of Moses as the ideal leader” is here emphasized (as Hanson believes, 1975, 89). There is no evidence from the text in support of Hanson’s claim that the Levites citing their kinship to Moses are claiming legitimacy because the Zadokites failed to acknowledge their membership in the restoration cult (1975, 95).

The road made through the divided waters of the Red Sea was as safe and firm as the ground on which ‘*a horse*’ is moving sure-footedly across ‘*the desert*’ (v. 13) (Westermann, 1969, 390; Whybray, 1975, 259).

The entry into the land of Canaan is likened to ‘*cattle that go down into the valley*’ (v. 14).

The expression ‘*the spirit of YHWH gave them rest*’ (i.e. brought into the promised land) (Whybray, p. 259) alludes to Exod. 33:14; Deut. 3:20, 12:9; Josh. 1:13, 15, 22:4.

Isaiah 63:15-19a

¹⁵ הבט משמים וראה מזבל קדשך ותפארתך

איה קנאתך וגבורתך המון מעיך

ורחמיך אלי התאפקו:

¹⁶ כי־אתה אבינו

כי אברהם לא ידענו וישראל לא יכירנו

אתה יהוה אבינו גאלנו מעולם שמך:

¹⁷ למה תתענו יהוה מדרכיך תקשיח לבנו מיראתך

שוב למען עבדיך שבטי נחלתך:

¹⁸ למצער ירשו עמ־קדשך צרינו בוססו מקדשך:

^{19a} היינו מעולם לא־משלת בם לא־נקרא שמך עליהם

(15) *Look from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious dwelling.*

*Where is your zeal and your mighty deeds, the sound of your heart
and your compassion which are hidden from me.*

(16) *For you are our father,*

though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us.

You, O YHWH, are our father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.

(17) *Why, O YHWH, do you make us stray from your ways and harden our
heart, so that we do not fear you?*

*Turn back for the sake of your servants, for the sake of the tribes of your
heritage.*

(18) *For a little while your holy people took possession, our adversaries have
trampled down your sanctuary.*

(19a) *We have been from of old like those you have not ruled over them, like
those over whom your name has not been called.*

Isa. 63:15-19a contains the community's lament for lack of any saving act on YHWH's part (vv. 15, 19a), the expression of their confidence in YHWH's sole intervention and help (v. 16), and description of their present distress (ethical corruption: YHWH permits sin so that they do 'not fear' Him (v. 17) - the destruction of the Temple by their 'adversaries' (v. 18).

YHWH is entreated to look down from his heavenly 'dwelling' (v. 15).

The expression 'you are our father' (63:16; 64:8) is unprecedented in the book of Isaiah.

Hanson sees Isa. 63:7-64:12 as further evidence of the conflict between "the Zadokite group returning from exile and the dissident Levitical-prophetic group (visionaries)" (1975, 96). It is, he believes, a lament by "the Levitical priests who had remained in the land and who were the ones who carried on the activity around the altar site during the dark years of the exile" at their exclusion from the sanctuary by the Zadokite (hierocratic) programme for "the restoration cult" (1975, 95). Thus the enemies who 'have trampled down the sanctuary' (63:18) are, according to

Hanson, not external ones but internal rivals and the designation '*our adversaries*' "applies to the Zadokite priestly party" (1975, 96).

The affirmation '*you are our father*' (63:16 twice, 64:8) on the ground that '*Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us*' (63:16) is taken by Hanson as evidence that the Levitical group has been rejected by the central community (the leadership of the Zadokite priests) who are called by the names '*Abraham*' and '*Israel*' (63:16) (1975, 93).

A logical argument against Hanson's claim could be that the Levitical priests (who had not been in exile) would be likely to have retained these names exclusively for themselves to defend their status as an authentic Israelite and true child of YHWH, "while finding some more pejorative title by which to refer to their opponents" (Williamson, 1990, 54). Abraham and Israel refer not to the community but to the patriarchs (as in the book of Chronicles, Jacob is called Israel in order to emphasize the link between the people and their ancestor), the human '*fathers*' of the nation now unable to assist the present generation in their distress, unlike YHWH who alone "is a living and present father" (Westermann, 1969, 393; cf. Williamson, 1990, 54). Further, the one who is doing the rejecting is YHWH. He appears as if He has become the enemy of His own people, by permitting the nations to destroy the cult (63:18). Contrary to Hanson, the issue in the lament is not exclusion from the cult but rather the destruction of the cult (Schramm, 1995, 153).

The lament in 63:7-64:12 "follows the conventional pattern of such laments within the psalter, consisting of the usual elements: recollection of God's past saving actions (63:7-14) extended as in Psalm 89 which not only begins similarly but likewise concludes by questioning of God; plea for help, which includes a description of the distress which was the immediate cause of the lament (63:15-64:5a); and confession of sin (64:5b-7). Finally the various elements in the lament are gathered up (64:8-12), culminating in the anguished questioning of God" (Emmerson, 1992, 27-28).

V. 17 contains acknowledgement of the people's sin.

Behind the question '*Why, O YHWH, do you make us stray from your ways (commandments)*' is the view that everything is directly due to YHWH's will, (even the people's sin is somehow YHWH's doing) a view presupposing Isa. 6:9-10.

Hanson interprets the reference to עבדיך (*your servants*) (63:17b) as evidence of a rift in the restoration community. However, the speaker is speaking on behalf of the community as a whole (63:7: *the house of Israel*; 63:17b: *your servants,...the tribes of your heritage*; 63:18: *your holy people*; 64:8: *we are all your people*) (cf. Schramm, 1995, 153) and about the ethical decay in the community as a whole.

In the light of 64:10 (*Our holy and beautiful house, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned by fire*), 63:18 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, especially its Temple, from the external enemies of Israel.

Isa. 63:17-18 combines the two features (Isa. 59:1-15a: inter-community ethical decay, and Isa. 60-63:1-6: nations' subservient role to Israel because of the destruction they caused to her) of eschatological hope in Isaiah 56-66, a hope placed on YHWH who is anticipated as the sole saviour (63:16, 64:8: *you are our father*, 64:3: *From of old no one has heard, no one has perceived by the ear no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for the one who waits for him*) intervening in the world in the remarkable manner he did in the ancient past (exodus).

In v. 19a YHWH is reproached as a king who abandons his subjects (*You have never ruled over them*) and an owner who is indifferent to the loss of his property (*Your name has never been called over them*) (Whybray, 1975, 262).

The expression '*Your name has never been called over them*' denotes ownership.

Isaiah 63:19b-64:4a

לוא-קרעת שמים ירדת מפניך הרים נזלו: ^{63:19b}

כקרח אש המסים מים תבעה-אש^{64:1}

להודיע שמך לצריך מפניך גוים ירגזו:

² בעשותך נוראות לא נקוה ירדת מפניך הרים נזלו:

³ ומעולם לא-שמעו לא האזינו

עין לא-ראתה אלהים זולתך יעשה למחכה-לו:

^{4a} פגעת את-שש ועשה צדק בדרכיך יזכרוך

(63:19b) *If only you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence,*

(64:1) *as fire kindles brushwood or fire causes water to boil- to make your name known to your adversaries so that the nations might tremble at your presence.*

(2) *When you did wonderful deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.*

(3) *From of old no one has heard, no one has perceived by the ear no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for the one who waits for him.*

(4a) *You meet with kindness with the joyful and (with) the one doing right who remember you in your ways (commandments).*

Isa. 63:19b-64:4a is a plea for YHWH's intervention to save his people from the enemy nations and for the sake of the righteous and those who 'wait for him' (64:3). The new epiphany longed for is expected to be like that one in the past (64:2-4), although the people deliberately had sinned (63:15-19a), and more wondrous than at the time of exodus (64:2).

The motif of waiting for YHWH, and specifically for the demonstration of the justice of YHWH's ways, described in Isa. 63:19b-64:2, is common in the book of Isaiah.

An aspect of this motif is the 'coming down' of YHWH from the heavens (63:19b: *you would tear open the heavens and come down*, 64:2: *you came down*) which alludes to Isa. 31:4: *For thus YHWH said to me, As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey, and - when a band of shepherds is called out against it - is not terrified by their shouting or daunted at their noise, so YHWH of hosts will come down*

to fight upon Mount Zion and upon its hill, where YHWH is expected to ‘come down’ to rescue Jerusalem by attacking Assyria (v. 8).

The judgement of YHWH against his ‘adversaries’, ‘the nations’ (64:1) is described in 64:1 by means of the metaphor of fire (*as fire kindles brushwood*), a frequent element in theophanies (Exod. 19:18; Psalm 18:8) (Whybray, 1975, 262).

Isa. 64:4b-6

הִן־אַתָּה קִצַּפְתָּ וְנַחֲטָא בָהֶם עוֹלָם וְנוֹשָׁע: ^{4b}

וְנָהִי כְטֵמָא כָּלֵנוּ וְכַבֵּגְד עֲדִים כָּל־צַדִּיקֵינוּ ⁵

וְנִבֵּל כְּעֵלָה כָּלֵנוּ וְעוֹנָנוּ כְּרוּחַ יִשְׁאָנוּ:

וְאֵין־קוֹרָא בְשִׁמְךָ מִתְעוֹרָר לְהַחְזִיק בְּךָ ⁶

כִּי־הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנּוּ וְתִמּוּגָנוּ בִּיד־עוֹנָנוּ:

(4b) *Behold! When you were angry, and we sinned in those ancient times, we could still be saved.*

(5) *We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.*

We all fade like a leaf, and the punishment for our iniquity takes us away like the wind.

(6) *There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you, because you have hidden your face from us, and you have melted us by means of the punishment for our iniquity.*

Isa. 64:4b-6 contain a confession of sin (vv. 5a: *We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a stained cloth*, 6a: *There is no one who calls on your name, or attempt to take hold of you*) (cf. 59:9-15a). The speaker complains that the situation has become so hopeless that even the ‘righteous deeds’ of the people have become worthless in YHWH’s eyes and abhorrent to him (Whybray, 1975, 265).

The theme of the acknowledgement of sin is also found in Isa. 59:12-13.

The people lament (in first plural) that after their punishment for their iniquity they *'all fade like a leaf'* (v. 5b α) and that *'the punishment for'* their *'iniquity takes'* them *'away like the wind'* (v. 5b β).

The picture of the withering/fading of leaves is used in the book of Isaiah to express the punishment of people:

a) In Isa. 1:30: *For you shall be like an oak whose leaf withers, and like a garden without water*, the punishment of those who had participated in idolatrous cult practices (Clements, 1980, 37) is described as the withering of leaves.

b) In Isa. 34:4: *All the host of heaven shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall wither like a leaf withering on a vine, or fruit withering on a fig tree*, the judgement upon all nations is expanded to embrace the whole created order which is expected to *'wither like a leaf withering on a vine, or fruit withering on a fig tree'*.

In 64:6 the confession broadens to include indifference to worship (64:6a: *There is no one who calls on your name. (There is no one who) rouses oneself to take hold of you*) and to YHWH in face of YHWH's having *'hidden his face'* from them (64:6b α). The circular interaction of sin that leads to judgement that leads to further sin is here recognized (Watts, 1987, 335).

The theme of Israel's iniquity causing her punishment from YHWH (64:5b β : *and the punishment for our iniquity take us away like the wind*, 64:6b β : *you have melted us by means of the punishment for our iniquity*) is found in Isa. 59:18a (*According to their deeds is (that which) he will repay: wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies*) and alludes to Isa. 1:24, 1:19-20, 1:(27-)28, 3:10-11 (see above the discussion in Isa. 59), 5:25, 9:11, 16, 20 (NRSV 9:12, 17, 21), 10:4 (see above the discussion in 63:1-6).

The theme of YHWH's *'hiding'* himself because of the *'iniquities'* of the people is found in Isa. 59:2 (*your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he does not hear*) and both allude to Isa. 1:4-5, 1:15, 42:24-25, 50:1 (see above in Isa. 59).

Isaiah 64:7-11

⁷ ועתה יהוה אבינו אתה

אנחנו החמר ואתה יצרנו ומעשה ידך כלנו:

⁸ אל־תקצף יהוה עד־מאד ואל־לעד תזכר עון

הן הבט־נא עמך כלנו:

⁹ ערי קדשך היו מדבר

ציון מדבר היתה ירושלם שממה:

¹⁰ בית קדשנו ותפארתנו אשר הללוך אבותינו

היה לשרפת אש וכל־מחמדינו היה לחרבה:

¹¹ העל־אלה תתאפק יהוה תחשה ותעננו עד־מאד:

(7) Now, YHWH, you are our father.

We are the clay, and you are our potter, and we are all the work of your hand.

(8) Do not be exceedingly angry, O YHWH, and do not remember iniquity for ever.

Now endure to see, we are all your people.

(9) Your holy cities have become a wilderness,

Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

(10) Our holy and beautiful house, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned by fire, and all our precious things have become ruins.

(11) Will you restrain yourself at these things, O YHWH? Will you keep silent, and afflict us so severely?

Isa. 64:7-11 is the final plea to YHWH for deliverance (v. 11: *Will you restrain yourself at these things, O YHWH? Will you keep silent, and afflict us so severely?*), including references to the people's present distress (v. 8a: estrangement between YHWH and his people because of their iniquity - vv. 9-10: ruined cities and Temple as a result of enemy action), and stressing the positive aspects of YHWH's relation to his people (vv. 7b: *We are the clay, and you are our potter, and we are all the work of your hand*, 8b: *we are all your people*) (testifying to the people's confidence in YHWH).

The theme of 'clay' and 'potter' referring to the relationship between YHWH and his people is found in Isa. 29:16 and 45:9.

The expression '*we are all the work of your hand*' is similar to the one in Isa. 60:21: *the work of his hands*, and in 54:5: *your Maker*, 44:21: *I formed you*.

V. 8 pleads with YHWH to end his anger and judgement of their iniquity. The belief/theme that YHWH's anger and punishment have limits occurs in Isa. 57:16-18 and alludes to Isa. 47:6, Isa. 54:7-9 (see above in Isa. 57) (cf. 48:9).

In vv. 9-10 the present state of the land [(9) *Your holy cities have become a wilderness, Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation*. (10) *Our holy and beautiful house, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned by fire, and all our precious things have become ruins*], taken up from 63:18 (*our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary*) and expanded as an introduction to the final appeal to YHWH, is described.

Vv. 9-10 allude to Isa. 1:7-8 although the vocabulary is different (A.J. Tomasino, 1993, 85-86): (7) *Your country lies desolate, your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence aliens devour your land; it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners*. (8) *And daughter Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a shelter in a cucumber field, like a besieged city*.

Isa. 1:2-9 and 63:7-64:11 describe the same situation: they presuppose that YHWH is the people's father (1:2: *I reared children and brought them up*); but the people have become sinful (1:4: *sinful nation, people laden with iniquity, offspring who do evil, children who deal corruptly, who have forsaken YHWH, who have despised the Holy One of Israel, who are utterly estranged*), and therefore the land has been devastated (1:7-8). The difference between the passages lies in purpose. Isa. 1:2-9 is addressed to the people, essentially as call for repentance, while Isa. 63:7-64:11 is a prayer for mercy. It does not deny that the punishment is well-deserved, but it pleads with YHWH to put

away his anger and take action against those who defile his sanctuary (Tomasino, 1993, 86).

The central theme of the lament in Isa. 63:7-64:11 is the lack of any saving act on YHWH's part because of the people's sin, a theme which alludes to Isa. 1:4-5; 1:15; 1:19-20; 1:24; 1:27-28; 3:10-11; 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20 (NRSV: 9:12, 17, 21); 10:4; 42:24-25; 50:1; 59:2, 18a.

The community expresses its confidence in YHWH's sole intervention and help recalling YHWH's wondrous acts at the exodus event (cf. Isa. 10:24-27; 11:15-16; 43:16-17; 50:2; 51:10; 46:3-4 where recollection and re-introduction of themes taken from the exodus story occurs).

b) Isaiah 65:1-25

Isaiah 65:1-7

- ¹ נדרשתי ללוא שאלו נמצאתי ללא בקשני
אממרתני הנני הנני אל-גוי לא-קרא בשמי:
- ² פרשתי ידי כל-היום אל-עם סורר
ההלכים הדרך לא-טוב אחר מחשבתיהם:
- ³ העם המכעיסים אותי על-פני תמיד
זבחים בגנות ומקטרים על-הלבנים:
- ⁴ הישבים בקברים ובנצורים ילינו
האכלים בשר החזיר ופרק פגלים כליהם:
- ⁵ האמרים קרב אליך אל-תגש-בי כי קדשתיך
אלה עשן באפי אש יקדת כל-היום:
- ⁶ הנה כתובה לפני
- לא אחשה כי אם-שלמתי ושלמתי על-חיקם:
- ⁷ עונתיכם ועונת אבותיכם יחדו אמר יהוה
אשר קטרו על-ההרים ועל-הגבעות חרפוני

ומדתי פעלתם ראשנה על-חיקם:

(1) *I let myself be consulted by those who did not ask. I let myself be found by those who did not seek me.*

I say: 'Here I am, here I am', to a nation that did not call^a on my name (literally: that it is not called with my name).

(2) *I spread out my hand all day long to a rebellious people who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices,*

(3) *to a people who provoke me to my face, continually, sacrificing in gardens and burning incense on the bricks (roof-tiles),*

(4) *sitting in the tombs and spending the night in guarded/secret places, eating swine's flesh and a broth^b of unclean things in^c their vessels.*

(5) *saying, 'keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am set apart from you (I am consecrated).*

These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all day.

(6) *See! It is written before me.*

I will not keep silent, but I will requite. I will indeed requite into their bosom.

(7) *Your iniquities and the iniquities of your fathers together', says YHWH, who offered incense on the mountains and on the hills they reproached me, I will measure their earlier doing into their bosom.*

Textual notes:

(1) ^a Read קרא (Qal, Perfect, 3rd masculine singular) with Syriac version, LXX, Latin Vulgate, Targum.

(4) ^b Qere מרק 'broth' (so 1QIsa^a, LXX, Targum, Vulgate) the Kethib פרק 'fragment'.

^c Read בכליהם with 1QIsa^a.

Isa. 65:1-25 is the last section of Isa. 63:7-65:25, an anthology summarizing the eschatological thoughts for the ethical (63:17, 64:5-6) and cultic (65:1-7, 11-12) life within Israel, and Israel's position facing the nations (63:18, 64:1, 9-10; 65:18, 19b, 21, 22-23a).

Commentators have been divided over the issue of the relationship between 63:7-64:11 and 65:1-25. Some have argued that 65:1-25 was

originally an independent composition and its connection to 63:7-64:11 was secondary made by a redactor (Hanson, 1975, 81, 134; cf. H. Odeberg, 1931, 21; Jones, 1964, 104). Hanson has stated that 65:1-25 appears to furnish an answer to 63:7-64:11, since the attack on cultic abuses in 65:1-25 does not really answer the questions raised by the lament (1975, 81). Others have contended that 65:1-25 contains a response to the lament³¹.

In my view 65:1-25 functions as a criticism of the claims made in 63:7-64:11 redefining themes and terms of 63:7-64:11 and reducing the idea of the 'servants' of YHWH (63:17) from 'all the people' (64:8) to 'the one who waits for him' (64:3), his 'chosen' ones (65:9), and that of 'the people of YHWH' (63:8a, 11a, 14b, 18; 64:7, 8) to the 'people who seek me out' (65:10) (Steck, (1989)1991g, 40, n. 119). Those who raised the lament in 63:7-64:11 pleading for YHWH's help (cf. 64:11: *Will you restrain yourself at these things, O YHWH? Will you keep silent, and afflict us so severely?*) meet with words of judgement in 65:1-25 (cf. 65:1: *I let myself be consulted by those who did not ask. I let myself be found by those who did not seek me. I say: 'Here I am, here I am', to a nation that did not (call on my name) call me with my name*). Hanson's claim, according to Schramm, that the visionary disciples of Second Isaiah are behind both 63:7-64:11 and 65:1-25 is absurd. "The relationship between 63:7-64:11 and chapter 65 is not that of the theological progression of a single tradition, as Hanson would have us believe, but rather the former serves as the foil for the proclamation of the latter" (Schramm, 1995, 155-156), and this inner-textual exegesis reflects the influence of mantological exegesis³² with its ultimate goal to speak about the eschaton in the light of YHWH's imminent intervention. Isa. 65:1-25 consists of the following sub-units: a) 65:1-7 (accusation against those who seek YHWH in an illicit cultic way). b) 65:8-16a (dualism on cultic basis: servants are blessed, wicked are killed). c)

³¹ Steck, [(1987)1991f, 221-225] regards Isaiah 65-66 as a literary unit and, as a whole, an answer to the lament; cf. Smith, 1995, 132; Koenen, 1990, 161; Beuken, 1990, 76.

³² Fishbane, 1985, 458 n. 1, 460.

65:16b-25 (the conclusion of 63:7-65:25) deals with the transformation of Jerusalem and her people into rejoicing (vv. 18, 19b), prosperity (v. 21), peace from external enemies (vv. 22-23a), communion with YHWH (vv. 23b-24), the downfall of the wicked people in judgement and the blessing for the servants (v. 25).

After the people's lament for the withdrawal of YHWH's help (in their distress³³) from his people because of their sins (63:7-64:11), YHWH's answer containing condemnation of the contemporary prevalence of popular and syncretistic cults (e.g. the cult of the dead) alongside the traditional cult (65:3b-7), leading to a distinction between the faithful and the wicked on cultic grounds (65:8-16a, 25), the promise of transformation of Jerusalem and her people into rejoicing (65:18, 19b), of peace from external enemies (65:22a, 23a), and of perfect communion with YHWH (65:23b-24) is not fortuitous. All these features, although separate and without sequences and connections, are combined to form a pattern, which is also found in the previous eschatological structures and summarizes thoughts about the future for every aspect of Israel's life. Similar technique/pattern is found in the contents of the eschatologies in some apocalypses (4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, the Apocalypse of Abraham, and 3 Baruch). In these works the present distress (the catastrophe of Jerusalem and the fall of the temple in 70 C.E.) is the catalyst for the broader question of theodicy or justice of God. There is no real answer to the destruction of the temple, but their primary concern is with broader issues of eschatological expectations (Collins, 1984, 155-186) (see above in the Introduction).

YHWH's statement over the *'rebellious...who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices, to a people who provoke Him to His face, continually'* (vv. 2-3a), *'those who did not ask...those who did not seek'* Him (v. 1a), *'a nation that did not call on'* YHWH's *'name'* (v.1b), is a literary device and the link between 63:7-64:11 and 65:1-25. Verse 1 speaks of the previous

³³ That is, destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple as a result of enemy action, and ethical corruption.

openness of YHWH towards the whole people, which has come to an end. Now he will intervene in judgement for the wicked and salvation for the faithful. In answer to the question '*Where is YHWH?*' (63:11), YHWH states that he has continually made himself available to his people, but they had not sought him in the way he would like. The reference in the following verses (vv. 3b-7) is to apostate Israelites who have been preoccupied with cultic practices which are defiled by syncretistic rites (Whybray, 1975, 268). In the eschatological future the ideal community has to keep only YHWH's commandments and worship YHWH according only to the legitimate ritual laws.

The apostates are accused of being engaged in idolatrous practices (similar to the Canaanite rituals) (v. 3b: *sacrificing in gardens and burning incense on the bricks (roof-tiles)*, v.4: *sitting in the tombs and spending the night in guarded/secret places, eating swine's flesh and a broth of unclean things in their vessels*, v. 7b: *offering incense on the mountains and on the hills*). Hanson takes these accusations metaphorically and not literally and he regards this polemic as an attack on the cultic activity of "the self-righteous majority which controls and is defiling the central cult" similar to the attack found in 59:5-6 and 57:5-8 (1975, 146, 147).

However, the context in Isa. 59:1-15a is not the cultic irregularities but the moral and social corruption and the uncontrolled progress of injustice. Furthermore, some of the practices described in 65:3b-7 have been located by Th. Lewis and W. Houston in the context of a particular form of illicit cultic activity and should not be taken metaphorically but literally. The context for these activities is that of the cult of the dead and necromancy (65:4: *sitting in the tombs...spending the night in guarded/secret places*; 65:3: *sacrificing in gardens*), whose ritual has already been identified in 57:3-13a (Lewis, 1989, 158-160; Houston, 1993, 165-168).

Both (Isa. 57 and 65) condemn idolatrous practices (57:1-13a; 65:3b-7, 11-12), and both serve to reassure the faithful (57:13b-19; 65:8-16a,

18-24, 25a.c) and to proclaim the judgement of the unfaithful (57:20-21; 65:6-7, 11-12, 25b).

Whybray associates the practice of '*sacrificing in gardens* גִּנּוֹת' (v. 3b α) with fertility rites, with reference to Isa. 1:29 (*For you shall be ashamed of the oaks in which you delighted; and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen*) (1975, 269; cf. Achtemeier, 1982, 124; Watts, 1987, 343). According to Houston, gardens were sometimes used for burials (2 Kings 21:18; John 19:41) and sometimes cemeteries may be referred to as '*gardens*' (1993, 166).

The practice of '*burning incense on the bricks (roof-tiles)* מִקְטָרִים עַל-הַלְבָּנִים' (v. 3b β), used of idolatrous worship, is unique in the Old Testament.

The term הַלְבָּנִים '*the bricks*' might refer to "altars made of bricks, to the use of heated bricks in the preparation of incense, or to the offering of incense to '*the host of heaven*' on the brick or tile roofs of houses (2 Kings 23:12; Jerem. 19:13; Zeph. 1:5)" (Whybray, 1975, 269; cf. Watts, 1987, 343). The reading of the Dead Sea Isaiah Scroll (וַיִּנְקוּ יָדֵיהֶם עַל-הָאֲבָנִים) (*they suck hands upon the rocks*) is "not understandable", according to Kutscher (1974, 243; cf. 216), but "it seems to speak either of cleansing of the hands upon stones (cf. 57:6), or of pouring something out upon the stones" (Jones, 1964, 107).

The practice of '*sitting in the tombs*' (v. 4a α) consulting the spirits of the dead (necromancy) is also denounced in Isa. 8:19-20, 19:3.

The practice of '*spending the night in guarded/secret places* בְּנִצְוֹרִים' (v. 4a β) is associated with the one of '*sitting in the tombs*' and it is a form of incubation rite in which oracles from demons or the dead were sought by spending the night in the cemeteries (Whybray, 1975, 269; cf. Westermann, 1969, 401; Watts, 1987, 343), as Solomon does in 1 Kings 3 or like David's ritual descent in 2 Samuel 12:16 (Lewis, 1989, 159; Houston, 1993, 166).

The 'eating swine's flesh' בשר החזיר (v. 4b α ; cf. 66:3, 17) and 'a broth מרק of unclean things' פגלים (v. 4b β), forbidden to the Israelites in Lev. 11:7ff. and Deut. 14:8ff, constitute violations of Mosaic law (Hanson, 1975, 147; Achtemeier, 1982, 124). W. Houston suggests that the consumption of pig's flesh (and in 66:17 of the flesh of other unclean animals) is connected with the cult of the dead or a fertility ritual, because of some indication found in "Syria-Palestine, as well as in neighbouring countries", "although the evidence is scattered and difficult to interpret" (1993, 168).

The word פגול 'foul thing, refuse', only for unclean sacrificial flesh, is found nowhere else in the book of Isaiah. In Lev. 7:18; 19:7 the term is used for unacceptable sacrificial flesh which is eaten on the third day after the sacrifice.

In v. 5a the participants of these idolatrous rites claim to be consecrated (*keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am set apart from you (I am consecrated)*) through serving their gods, in the same way that the priests of YHWH serving in the Temple were surrounded by a 'holy' status that sets them apart or that gives them special powers (Whybray, 1975, 270; Watts, 1987, 343).

Vv. 5b-7 contain YHWH's announcement of the punishment of the idolaters (cultic abusers).

YHWH's anger at, and abhorrence of, the idolatrous rites is shown by the expressions עשן באפי 'these are a smoke in my nostrils' and 'a fire that burns all day'.

YHWH threatens that He 'will not keep silent, but' He 'will requite' the faithless 'into their bosom' (v. 6b).

At 64:11 the people have asked YHWH how long he will remain silent and inactive. 65:6b-7 answer that YHWH will not remain silent but will come to repay. YHWH will now intervene but he will intervene in judgement (Smith, 1995, 139).

The theme of the reward by YHWH according to one's deeds is also found in Isa. 59 where the '*recompense*' (wrath) by YHWH is announced to be given to his adversaries-sinners (on moral and social corruption grounds) (59:18), and salvation-prosperity to those who repent (59:20) (see above in Isa. 59 for parallels).

Here in 65:6 the sins of the faithless are cultic (Westermann, 1969, 402) and YHWH's reward-punishment is inflicted on practitioners of idolatrous practices.

In v. 7 the '*iniquities*' of the current generation will be added to '*the iniquities of*' their '*fathers*' who had done the same thing (cultic abuses) in the past (they offered incense on the mountains and on the hills they reproached YHWH). The new generation had not changed its ways, and was to be punished because of the sinfulness which it had inherited (*I will measure their earlier doing into their bosom*) (Whybray, 1975, 271).

Isaiah 65:8-16a

⁸ כה אמר יהוה כאשר ימצא התירוש באשכול

ואמר אל־תשחיתו כי ברכה בו

כן אעשה למען עבדי לבלתי השחית הכל:

⁹ והוצאתי מיעקב זרע ומיהודה יורש הרי

וירשנה בחירי בעבדי ישכנו־שמה:

¹⁰ והיה השרון לנוה־צאן ועמק עכור לרבץ בקר

לעמי אשר דרשוני:

¹¹ ואתם עזבי יהוה השכחים את־הר קדשי

הערכים לגד שלחן והממלאים למני ממסך:

¹² ומניתי אתכם לחרב וכלכם לטבח תכרעו

יען קראתי ולא עניתם דברתי ולא שמעתם

ותעשו הרע בעיני ובאשר לא־חפצתי בחרתם:

¹³ לֵכֶן כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה

הִנֵּה עֲבָדַי יֹאכְלוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּרְעָבוּ

הִנֵּה עֲבָדַי יִשְׁתּוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּצְמָאוּ

הִנֵּה עֲבָדַי יִשְׁמְחוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּבְשּׁוּ:

¹⁴ הִנֵּה עֲבָדַי יִרְנוּ מִטוֹב לִבִּי

וְאַתֶּם תִּצְעַקוּ מִכָּאֵב לִבִּי וּמִשְׁבַּר רוּחַ תִּלְלִילוֹ:

¹⁵ וְהִנַּחְתֶּם שְׁמֵכֶם לִשְׁבוּעָה לְבַחֲרִי וְהִמִּיתֵךְ אֲדֹנִי יְהוָה

וּלְעֲבָדָיו יִקְרָא שֵׁם אַחֵר:

^{16ab} אֲשֶׁר הִמְתַּבֵּרֵךְ בְּאֶרֶץ יִתְבָּרֵךְ בְּאֱלֹהֵי אֲמֵן

וְהִנְשַׁבַּע בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׁבַּע בְּאֱלֹהֵי אֲמֵן

(8) *Thus says YHWH: As the wine is found in the cluster,
and they say, 'Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it',
so I will do for my servants' sake, in order not to destroy the whole.*

(9) *I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah an inheritor of
my mountains,
and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall settle there.*

(10) *And the Sharon shall become a sheep-pasture, and the Valley of Achor a
resting-place for herds,
for my people who seek me out.*

(11) *But you who forsake YHWH, who forget my holy mountain,
who arrange a table for Gad and fill (cups) with wine for Meni (god of Fate).*

(12) *I will assign you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the
slaughter.*

*Because, I called, but you did not answer, I spoke, but you did not listen,
and you did what was evil in my eyes, and you chose what I did not delight in.*

(13) *Therefore, thus says the Lord YHWH:*

'See, my servants will eat, but you will be hungry.

See, my servants will drink, but you shall be thirsty.

See, my servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.

(14) *See, my servants will give a ringing cry from joy of heart,*

but you will cry out from pain of heart, and you will wail(howl) for anguish(shattering) of spirit.

*(15) And you will leave your name for a curse to my chosen. When the Lord YHWH will kill you,
and he will call his servants another name,*

*(16ab) he who blesses himself in the land, shall be blessed by the true God,
and whoever takes an oath in the land, shall swear by the God of truth;*

Isa. 65:8-16ab continues to respond to the lament in 63:7-64:11 by taking up the theme of the 'servants' (63:17b). Now, however, this term is re-interpreted in terms of the criteria set in 65:1 and 10b, according to which only the faithful among the people in Israel will be designated 'servants' (Koenen, 1990, 168; cf. Smith, 1995, 142). This inner-textual exegesis is indicative of mantological exegesis in 65:1-25.

Isa. 65:8-16ab expounds the contrasting destiny of the faithful (v. 10b: *my people who seek me out*, vv. 8c, 9bβ, 13-14: *my servants*, vv. 9bα, 15: *my chosen*) and apostates (v. 11: *who forsake YHWH, who forget my holy mountain, who arrange a table for Gad and fill (cups) with wine for Meni*, v. 12c: *who did what was evil in my eyes, and...chose what I did not delight in*) on a cultic basis, detailing the blessings (vv. 9-10: increased population and inheritance of the land; vv. 13-14: *eat, drink, rejoice, give a ringing cry from joy of heart*) for the first, and the punishment (v. 12a: *I will assign you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter*; v. 15: *the Lord YHWH will kill you*) and bitter sorrows (vv. 13-14: *be hungry, thirsty, be put to shame, cry out from pain of heart, and wail for anguish of spirit*) which await the latter. This dualism (on cultic grounds) testifies for the use of wisdom language.

V. 8 states that YHWH's judgement is designed to destroy only the apostates, and it is carefully administered '*not to destroy the whole*' (Watts, 1987, 344).

The '*whole*' of Israel is seen as a '*cluster*' of grapes. Because '*wine*' is found in a '*cluster*' of grapes it is not destroyed by the vinegrower; '*there is a*

blessing in it'. The metaphor here implies a delay in the final destruction in order that the good may not perish with the bad. The faithful (*servants*) are like good grapes among the wild and hopeless ones. The image is not one in which juice is produced and the refuse of the grape thrown away. It is the cluster of grapes as a 'whole' that is not destroyed 'for' YHWH's 'servants' sake'. The emphasis is laid on 'the blessing' (fruitfulness, vitality, potential life; metaphorically of the righteous) which the 'cluster' (Israel) contains (cf. Jones, 1964, 109; Watts, 1987, 344). Cf. the imagery of grapes in Isa. 5:1-7 (indictment against Israel, His vineyard) and 27:2-6 (which uses 5:1-7 and 65:8 to give a more positive note of hope for the future).

Vv. 9-10 deal with the salvation promised to YHWH's 'chosen' (בְּחִיר), His 'servants' (v. 9b), His 'people who seek Him out' (v. 10b). Whereas in Isa. 41:8; 42:1; 43:10, 20; 44:1; 45:4 the verb בָּחַר 'to choose' is used to refer to YHWH's choice of Israel as a whole, in 65:1-25 it has been redeployed so as to refer to those who have remained faithful, those who have chosen 'what YHWH delights in' (65:12).

The righteous will have 'descendants' and will 'inherit' the land (*my mountains*) (v. 9a) where they will 'settle' (v. 9b).

The inheritance of the land (*my mountains*) by a faithful section within Israel is a literary eschatological device found in the other three units of Isaiah 56-66:

a) Isa. 56:1-57:21:

1. Isa. 57:13c: ...*He who takes refuge in me* (not those who take part in illicit cultic practices) *shall inherit the land...* (see above in Isaiah 57).

b) Isa. 58:1-59:20:

1. Isa. 58:12 (to those who fast in a way pleasing to YHWH by acts of social justice and moral behaviour).

2. Isa. 58:14 (to those who observe the sabbath) (see above in Isaiah 58).

c) Isa. 60:1-63:6:

1. In Isa. 60:21 the possession of the land is destined for all alike because all will be righteous (here on moral and ethical grounds, described in 60:17c-18), and in 60:22 a greatly increased population is promised. It is the community as a whole who will inherit the land (see above Isaiah 60).

2. In Isa. 61:7 the promise of possession of '*a double portion*' '*in their land*', Zion, is given to the *afflicted/poor, broken-hearted, captives, prisoners* (v. 1), and *mourners* (v. 2), after the rebuilding of the city (v. 4), and their transformation into righteous people (*oaks of righteousness*) (v. 3c), and '*priests of YHWH*' (spiritual leaders) (v. 6a), being released by foreigners from manual work and enjoying *the wealth of the nations* and *glorying in their riches* (v. 6b).

d) Isa. 63:7-65:25:

1. Isa. 63:18 is a possible reference to the loss by YHWH's '*servants*' (63:17) of possession of Zion to external enemies. They complain about the destruction of Jerusalem (and its Temple) by the external enemies of Israel (cf. their final plea to YHWH (64:7-11) for deliverance (v. 11) where, including references to the people's present distress (v. 8a: estrangement between YHWH and his people because of their iniquity), the '*servants*' of YHWH refer also to the present state of the land (vv. 9-10: (9) *Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.* (10) *Our holy and beautiful house....and all our precious things have become ruins*). The former loss of possession of the land from external enemies is a literary device which leads to the eschatological hope of its inheritance from the righteous ones. Isa. 65:9b offers an inner-textual exegesis of 63:18.

In v. 10 the promised land will extend from '*the Sharon*', the coastal plain in the west, to '*the Valley of Achor*', near Jericho in eastern Palestine (where Joshua began the conquest, Jos. 7:24-26; 15:7) (Whybray, 1975, 273).

Vv. 11-12 deal with the destiny of those '*who forsake YHWH*', '*who forget His holy mountain*', those who participate in illicit cults (*who arrange a table for Gad and fill (cups) with wine for Meni (god of Fate)*).

The unfaithful, having abandoned the worship of YHWH for their cultic malpractices (idolatrous rites), will be destroyed (v. 12a: *I will assign you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter*/v. 15aβ: *the Lord YHWH will kill you*/v. 25b: *the serpent's food shall be dust*) (cf. 1:28b-29: (28b) *and those who forsake YHWH shall be consumed*. (29) *For you shall be ashamed of the oaks in which you delighted; and you shall blush for the gardens that you have chosen*; 2:8, 18-21; 57:20-21).

In v. 15b YHWH's '*servants*' will be called by '*another name*' which as in 62:2 signifies the beginning of a new era, of their blessed future (Whybray, 1975, 274) (see above, in Isa. 58:12b; 60:14b; 61:3c; 62:2b; 62:4b; 62:12, where the motif of giving of a new name recognizes a new status or condition, and describes transformation of character). In 62:2, 12 the people as a whole will receive a new name. In 65:15b only the faithful servants of YHWH.

The *name* of the wicked (which is not revealed) is to become *a curse* for YHWH's *chosen* (v. 15a).

V. 16ab announces the end of every kind of idolatrous worship by emphasizing that '*when the Lord YHWH will kill*' the wicked (v. 15aβ), only YHWH, '*the God of truth*', and not another heathen god, will be invoked '*in the land*' for a blessing or for taking an oath, because only the righteous (His *servants*) and their '*descendants*' will '*inherit*' the land (*my mountains*) (v. 9a) and '*settle there*' (v. 9b), while those who worship heathen gods (*Gad and...Meni*) (v. 11) will be *assigned to the sword*, and they *shall bow down to the slaughter* (v. 12a) (cf. Jones, 1964, 111; Koenen, 1990, 170).

Isaiah 65:16c

כי נשכחו הצרות הראשנות וכי נסתרו מעיני: ^{16c}

(16c) *then the former troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes.*

V. 16c, with its strong anticipation and certainty of the new age and YHWH's imminent intervention, gives an assurance that the 'former troubles' (63:7-65:16b) 'will be forgotten and hidden from YHWH's eyes'. It is related thematically to what follows (cf. v. 17b: *the former things shall not be remembered, nor do they come to mind*) (as Westermann, 1969, 407, and Whybray, 1975, 275 believe). If we see it as part of the whole unit that precedes (Isa. 63:7-65:16ab) it does not remain isolated because the former problematic situation (*the former troubles*) described in 63:7-64:11 and 65:1-16ab (ethical corruption, destruction because of external enemy action, prevalence of idolatrous cults) changes into the joyful one described in 65:17-25 (*the former things* are transformed to *new ones*).

Isaiah 65:17-25

¹⁷ כִּי־הֲנִי בּוֹרֵא שָׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים וָאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה

וְלֹא תִזְכְּרָנָה הָרָאשִׁנוֹת וְלֹא תִעֲלִינָה עַל־לֵב:

¹⁸ כִּי־אִם־שִׁישׁוּ וְגִילוּ עַד־יְעֹד אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי בּוֹרֵא

כִּי הֲנִי בּוֹרֵא אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם גִּלְיָה וְעִמָּה מְשׁוּשׁ:

¹⁹ וְגִלְתִּי בִירוּשָׁלַם וְשִׁשְׁתִּי בְעַמִּי

וְלֹא־יִשְׁמַע בָּהּ עוֹד קוֹל בְּכִי וְקוֹל זַעֲקָה:

²⁰ לֹא־יִהְיֶה מִשָּׁם עוֹד עוֹל יָמִים

וְזָקֵן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמְלָא אֶת־יָמָיו

כִּי הֲנִעַר בֶּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יָמוֹת וְהַחֹטֵא בֶּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יִקְלָל:

²¹ וּבָנוּ בָתִּים וַיֵּשְׁבוּ וְנִטְעוּ כִרְמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְּרִיָם:

²² לֹא יִבְנוּ וְאַחֵר יֵשֵׁב לֹא יִטְעוּ וְאַחֵר יֵאָכֵל

כִּי־כִימֵי הָעֵץ יָמֵי עַמִּי וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵיהֶם יִבְלוּ בַחִירִי:

²³ לֹא יִיגְעוּ לָרִיק וְלֹא יִלְדוּ לְבַהֲלָהּ

כִּי זֶרַע בְּרוּכִי יִהְיֶה הֵמָּה וְצֹאצְאֵיהֶם אֲתָם:

²⁴ יִהְיֶה טָרֶם־יִקְרָאוּ וְאֲנִי אֶעֱנֶה עוֹד הֵם מְדַבְּרִים וְאֲנִי אֲשַׁמְעֵם:

25 זאב וטלה ירעו כאחד ואריה כבקר יאכל-תבן

ונחש עפר לחמו

לא-ירעו ולא-ישחיתו בכל-הר קדשי אמר יהוה:

(17) *For, see, I will create new heavens and a new earth.*

The former things shall not be remembered, nor do they come to mind.

(18) *But be glad and rejoice for ever (in) what I am creating.*

For, see, I will transform Jerusalem into rejoicing and her people a joy.

(19) *And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and am glad in my people;*

and no more a sound of weeping shall be heard in her, or a sound of cry of distress.

(20) *No more from there shall come an infant (that lives a few) days,*

or an old person who does not complete his days.

For the young one shall die a hundred years old, and the one who fails to live to be a hundred will be considered accursed.

(21) *They shall build houses and live in them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.*

(22) *They shall not build and aliens inhabit. They shall not plant and aliens eat.*

For the days of my people will be like the days of a tree, and my chosen ones shall enjoy the work of their hands.

(23) *They shall not work in vain, or bear children in sudden terror.*

For they shall be the offspring of YHWH's blessed ones, and their offspring will be with them.

(24) *Before they call I will answer, and while they are still speaking I will hear.*

(25) *The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox;*

and the serpent's food shall be dust.

They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, says YHWH.

Isa. 65:17-25 is the eschatological climax of Isa. 63:7-65:16ab, consisting solely of promises of eschatological hope found in the previous structural units of Isaiah 56-66.

In v. 17a YHWH declares that he '*will create new heavens and a new earth*'. The transformation of '*heavens*' and '*earth*' comprehends everything, that is, all the problems.

I translate כִּי־הֵנִי בּוֹרֵא (vv. 17a, 18b) as '*For, see, I will create*' and '*For, see, I will transform*' because the syntax of the particle הֵנִי (הֵנִי) especially with the participle introduces clauses involving predication with reference to the future (BDB, 244, note b. (b)).

The theme of YHWH as creator is found in Isa. 40:12-31; 41:18-20; 42:5-9; 43:7, 15; 44:24; 45:8-13, 18; 47:13; 51:13, 16 (cf. Whybray, 1975, 276; Fishbane, 1985, 374).

The '*former things* (in the former heaven and earth) *shall not be remembered, nor do they come to mind*'. The theme of the '*former things*' is taken up from Isa. 43:18-19, and it is reinterpreted in terms of the end of the old age of idolatry and malpractice. Only because of the new age of salvation the apostates and their practices are forgotten.

The distinction between the '*former*' and the '*new*' things dominates in Second Isaiah. The '*former*' things in Second Isaiah refer to the salvific acts of YHWH during exodus as presented in Exodus 14-15. The '*new*' things refer to the act of YHWH which '*makes a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert*' (43:19; cf. 35:8), '*gives water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to His chosen people*' (43:20; cf. 35:6-7) and so makes possible a miraculous but nonetheless historically describable joyous return from exile of an enslaved people to its holy land and to freedom (Mauser, 1982, 182; cf. Fishbane, 1985, 363-364).

In 65:17 the '*new*' things constitute the ideal life, centred on a new Zion and enjoyed by those whom YHWH owns as '*my people*' (v. 19, 22b α) and '*my chosen ones*' (v. 22:b β).

Vv. 18-25 announce the exact nature of these '*new*' '*things*', that is, the future conditions of YHWH's '*servants*' already outlined in contrast to the apostates in 65:13-15, using the same terms in contexts of salvation and judgement:

- a) transformation of *Jerusalem* and *her people* into *rejoicing* (vv. 18, 19b; cf. 60:5, 15; 61:3, 7; 30:19; 35:10; 51:3; 52:7-10),
- b) YHWH rejoices because he returns to Zion and his people (v. 19a: *will rejoice in Jerusalem and am glad in my people*; 62:5),
- c) prosperity (v. 21: *They shall build houses and live in them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit*; cf. 58:12; 61:4; 64:9),
- d) human longevity (vv. 20, 22b α : *the days of my people will be like the days of a tree*),
- e) peace from external enemies (v. 22a.b β : *They shall not build and aliens inhabit. They shall not plant and aliens eat...and my chosen ones shall enjoy the work of their hands* (cf. 60:18; 62:8-9a); v. 23a β : *(they shall not) bear children in sudden terror*), v. 23a α : *they shall not work in vain*); Isa. 65:21-22 appears to be a direct reversal of the curses outlined in Amos 5:11, Zeph. 1:13.
- f) perfect relationship to YHWH (v. 23b: *they shall be the offspring of YHWH's blessed ones* (cf. 61:9b); v. 24: *Before they call I will answer, and while they are still speaking I will hear*),
- g) the blessing of the righteous (v. 25a.c) downfall of the wicked people in judgement (v. 25b).

It is widely held that v. 25 is a later addition (Sehmsdorf, 1972, 521-523) Whybray, 1975, 279; Vermeylen, 1978, 497; Koenen, 1990, 172) to give (together with v. 17) to 65:16b-25 an apocalyptic tone (Westermann, 1969, 410-411).

Careful analysis, in what follows, will prove that Isa. 65:25 is embedded in the context of Isa. 65 and recapitulates the whole chapter (van Ruiten, 1992, 31-42).

Firstly, the perfect relationship between YHWH and his '*blessed ones*' (v. 23b), described in v. 24, is reflected in v. 25a, metaphorically, in the harmony among predatory and domesticated animals (*The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox*; cf. 11:6-7b: *The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion*

and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, where the harmony in the animal world is described: predatory animals will live in peaceful harmony with the domesticated animals and defenceless children) which results in the disappearance of evil and violence from *all* YHWH's *holy mountain* (65:25c), that is, the whole land of Zion (Watts, 1987, 355; Mauser, 1982, 182, 184).

Secondly, v. 25b (*and the serpent's food shall be dust*) seems to be divergent from 65:25a, since it expresses not a blessing but a curse (cf. Gen. 3:14) and the commentators consider it as a gloss (Westermann, 1975, 407, n. b; Whybray, 1975, 279).

Nevertheless in both vv. 25a and 25b a predatory animal (*wolf, lion, serpent*) and an aspect of 'eating' (to graze, to eat straw, food) are mentioned. An equivalent of the weak animal (25a: *lamb, ox*) does not occur in 65:25b. Therefore, the point of 65:25b is not "being together in harmony" (as Watts, 1987, 355, understands it) of predatory and domesticated animal, but eating 'dust' [cf. the different tone in Isa. 11:8: *The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den*, where the dangerous serpents (*asp, adder*) are keeping company with the little child without harming it] (van Ruiten, 1992, 39-40).

The eating of 'dust' is used in Micah 7:17: *They shall lick dust like a snake, like the crawling things of the earth יִלְחָבוּ עֹפֶר בְּנֶחֱשׁ בְּזַחֲלֵי אֶרֶץ*; *they shall come trembling out of their fortresses; they shall turn in dread to YHWH our God, and they shall stand in fear of you*, as expression of an attitude of humility of nations (7:16: *The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf*) with regard to YHWH and his people. The expression contains an element of curse with regard to the nations, at the same time being a blessing for Israel (van Ruiten, 1992, 40-41).

Applying this meaning of “*licking of dust*” (in Mic. 7:17) to Isa. 65:25b (*the serpent’s food shall be dust*) van Ruiten finds that it “is used to indicate an attitude of humility, and servility of an hostile group...the once stronger” although the weak group is not mentioned in 65:25b. This is justified by 65:25c (*They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain*) (van Ruiten, 1992, 41).

Since the context is that the wicked will perish (65:1-16a), whereas the servants will be blessed (65:18-24) (cf. 57:20-21; 59:18-20; 11:3-5), van Ruiten’s suggestion to apply the meaning of humility also to 65:25a and to interpret the ‘*grazing of the wolf*’ and the ‘*eating of straw of the lion*’ as curses for these predatory animals and as blessings (their sustenance) for the domesticated animals (*lamb, ox*) that are not endangered by the predatory animals any more, is plausible.

Isa. 65:1-25 deals with a) accusation against those who seek YHWH in an illicit cultic way (65:1-7; cf. 1:29-31; 57:3-13a), b) dualism on a cultic basis: servants are blessed (65:8-10, 13-14, 15b, 20-21, 22b-23, 25a.c; cf. 57:13c, 18, 19), wicked are killed (65:11-12, 15a, 25b; cf. 57:13a.b, 14, 20-21), c) transformation of Jerusalem and her people into rejoicing (vv. 18, 19b; cf. 60:5, 15; 61:3; 30:19; 35:10; 51:3; 52:7-10), d) YHWH’s rejoicing in Zion and in his people (v. 19a; cf. 62:5), e) human longevity (65:20, 22b α), f) prosperity (65:21; cf. 58:12; 61:4; 64:9), g) peace from external enemies (65:22a, 23a; cf. 60:18; 61:3c, 5-6a; 62:8), h) perfect communion with YHWH (vv. 23b-24).

1) The implications for mantological exegesis in the fourth structural unit, Isa. 63:7-65:25, are the following:

- a) Learned preoccupation with older prophecy and inner-textual exegesis:

- 63:8a (cf. Isa. 14:1; 41:8-9; 43:1, 10; 44:1; 49:7): the recollection of Israel's election, as presented in Exod. 6:2-6, with its reference to Israel's being the elected and chosen people of YHWH.
- 63:8b-9a (allusion to Exod. 3:7-8): the recollection of Israel's salvation in their distress (cf. the theme that YHWH saves his people in all their distress in Isa. 33:2; 25:4; 26:16; 25:9; 33:22; 35:4; 38:20; 43:1, 3, 11, 12; 44:22-23; 45:15, 21; 48:20; 49:25, 26; 52:9).
- 63:9d (allusion to Exod. 19:4; Deut. 1:31; 32:11): the image of YHWH's carrying Israel in the wilderness (cf. the recollection of the same image in Isa. 46:3-4).
- 63:12b (allusion to Exod. 14:16, 14:21, 15:8, 16): recollection of the dividing of the waters (cf. the recollection of the same theme in Isa. 10:24-27; 11:15-16; 43:16-17; 50:2; 51:10).
- 63:12a (allusion to Exod. 6:6, 15:6, 12, 16; Deut. 4:34, 5:15, 7:19, 9:29, 11:2, 26:8): YHWH's *arm* saved His people.
- 63:13, 14b (allusion to Exod. 14:22, 14:29, 15:19): YHWH's leading His people *through the abysses of the sea*.
- 64:1 (allusion to Exod. 19:18): the metaphor of fire as element of theophanies.
- 64:5b α (cf. Isa. 1:30; 34:4): the punishment of the people is portrayed as the withering/fading of leaves.
- 64:5b β , 6b β (reapplication of Isa. 1:19-20; 1:24; 1:27-28; 3:10-11; 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20 (NRSV: 9:12, 17, 21); 10:4): the theme of Israel's iniquity causing her punishment from YHWH.
- 64:6b α (reapplication of Isa. 1:4-5; 1:15; 42:24-25; 50:1): the theme of YHWH's *hiding* himself because of the *iniquities* of the people.
- 64:7b (reapplication of Isa. 29:16; 45:9): the theme of *clay* and *potter* referring to the relationship between YHWH and his people.
- 64:9-10 (recontextualization of Isa. 1:7-8): the land has been devastated.

- 65:9b, 10b (where the verb בָּחַר *to choose* refers to those who have remained faithful) are a transformation of Isa. 41:8; 42:1; 43:10, 20; 44:1; 45:4 where the same verb is used to refer to YHWH's choice of Israel as a whole.
- 65:17b (reinterpretation of Isa. 43:18-19): the theme of the *former things*.
- 65:18, 19b (recontextualization of 30:19; 35:10; 51:3; 52:7-10): transformation of *Jerusalem and her people* into *rejoicing*.
- 65:25a (recontextualization of Isa. 11:6-7b): the apparent harmony among predatory and domesticated animals.

65:25b (recontextualization of Gen. 3:14): the curse that *the serpent's food shall be dust*.

- 65:6b-7 (inner-textual exegesis of 64:11): YHWH will not remain silent and inactive.
- 65:8-16a (inner-textual exegesis of 63:17b: *servants* ~ the community as a whole): only the faithful among the people in Israel will be designated '*servants*'.
- 65:9b: inheritance of land from righteous (inner-textual exegesis of 63:18: loss of possession of land from external enemies).
- 65:18, 19b, 21, 22-23a (inner-textual exegesis of Isa. 63:18, 64:1, 9-10): Israel's position facing the enemy nations. 65:22a.bβ inner-textual exegesis of 62:8-9.

2) Aggadic exegesis:

Typology of a cosmological-historical nature (Isa. 65:17: *I will create new heavens and a new earth*): the creation motif.

Typology of a historical nature (Isa. 63:7-14: YHWH's redemptive acts in the exodus).

3) Wisdom themes and vocabulary:

Isa. 65:6b: the theme of the reward by YHWH according to one's deeds (the principle of retribution).

Isa. 65:6-25: ethical dualism on cultic grounds: reassurance of the faithful (65:8-16a, 18-24, 25a.c) and judgement of the unfaithful (65:6-7, 11-12, 13-14, 15a β , 25b).

5. Isaiah 66:1-24

Isaiah 66:1-24, constituting a collection-summary of motifs, recapitulates the various eschatological hopes, described in the four eschatological literary structures of Isaiah 56-66: Isa. 56:1-57:21, 58:1-59:21, 60:1-63:6, 63:7-65:25. The eschatological destruction of all the sinners (66:6a α , 14b β : on ethical basis; 66:3a β .b-4, 5, 6a β , 17: on cultic grounds; 66:16, 24: all flesh who has transgressed against YHWH) and the salvation of the righteous (66:5, 7-14a.b α , 21) is one of the grounds for arguing that the last unit has used sapiential material.

Isaiah 66:1-4

¹ כה אמר יהוה

השמים כסאי והארץ הדם רגלי

אי-זה בית אשר תבנו-לי ואי-זה מקום מנוחתי:

² ואת-כל-אלה ידי עשתה ויהיו כל-אלה נאמ-יהוה

ואל-זה אביט אל-עני ונכה-רוח וחרד על-דברי:

³ שוחט השור מכה-איש זובח השא ערף כלב

מעלה מנחה דם-חזיר מזכיר לבנה מברך און

גם-המה בחרו בדרכיהם ובשקוציהם נפשם חפצה:

⁴ גם-אני אבחר בתעלליהם ומגורתם אביא להם

יען קראתי ואין עונה דברתי ולא שמעו

ויעשו הרע בעיני ובאשר לא-חפצתי בחרו:

(1) *Thus says YHWH:*

Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool.

What kind of house will you build for me, and what kind of place will be my rest?

(2) *My hand has made all these, and so all these came into being, says YHWH.*

But this is the one to whom I will look, to the poor/afflicted and contrite of spirit, who trembles at my word.

(3) *He who slaughters an ox kills a man. He who sacrifices a lamb breaks a dog's neck.*

He who presents a grain offering (offers) swine's blood. He who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, blesses an idol.

As these have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations (detested things),

(4) *I will also choose their wanton dealing and bring their terrors (things dreaded) upon them.*

Because, when I called, no one answered. When I spoke, they did not listen.

But they did what (was) evil in my eyes, and chose that which did not please me.

66:1-5 is concerned with the true nature of YHWH's dwelling-place (vv. 1-2) and worship (v. 3aα: polemic against cultic observances without righteous behaviour; vv. 3aβ.c-4: cultic impurity consisting in syncretistic idolatrous rites is condemned, v. 5: dualism between faithful and sinners on cultic basis) [in contrast to Hanson who understands these verses as an "indictment against an allegedly defiled group (Zadokite priests) which is building a temple (visionaries' repudiation of the temple building campaign of Haggai)" (1975, 163, 172-183)].

It is unlikely that we have in v. 1 (*Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, and what kind of place will be my rest?*) the outright opposition to the earthly temple with its system of sacrifices (v. 3).

If the intended meaning is the true nature of YHWH's dwelling-place, the passage does not conflict with the importance attaching to the Jerusalem temple and the religious rites in it, elsewhere in these chapters, but rather emphasizes the inadequacy of worship devoid of moral transformation. In this case it may be compared to the attitude towards:

a) fasting in 58:6-7, 9b-10a, where concern for the poor and deprived clearly takes precedence over ritual even though the practice of fasting in its traditional sense is probably not excluded (Beuken, 1989a, 57; cf. Koenen, 1990, 186, 188),

b) sabbath in 56:2 (*Blessed is the man who does this (righteousness), the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil*), and 58:13 (*If you draw back your foot from the sabbath, from doing your affairs on my holy day; and (if you) call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of YHWH honourable, and (if) you honour it by not doing your own ways and occupying yourself with your own affairs or speaking empty words*).

With the statement '*Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool*' (v. 1b) YHWH does not want to restrict His presence in the world to a particular building or site, but rather to indicate the entire cosmos as the domain of his sovereignty (cf. 65:17) (Beuken, 1989a, 55; cf. Koenen, 1990, 185). In this light v. 1c (*What kind of house will you build for me, and what kind of place will be my rest?*) does not contain a refusal of the reconstruction of the temple itself (Beuken, 1989a, 56). V. 1c contains a question (the basis for the accusation of illicit cultic activity in v. 3, regarding how people behave in that house) about the nature of the house.

YHWH has created everything (*My hand has made all these, and all these came into being*) (66:2a) but He cares for '*the one who is poor/afflicted and contrite of spirit*' (66:2b).

66:2 recapitulates the literary motif in which the transcendent creator, YHWH (as the unique saviour), cares for the humble and needy which is found in Isa. 57:15: *...I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of contrite and humble spirit* וְאֶת־דָּכָא וְשֹׁפֵל־רוּחַ, *to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite* (see above Isa. 57) and 63:19b: *If only you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence* (where His '*servants*' (63:17), those '*who wait for him*' (64:3b) plead for His intervention to save his people from the enemy '*nations*' (64:1) and wait for His '*coming down*' from '*heavens*') (see above Isa. 63:7-64:11).

V. 3 contains an accusation against people who perform legitimate cultic acts (to *slaughter an ox*, to *sacrifice a lamb*, to *present a grain offering*, to *make a memorial with frankincense*), but who at the same time act immorally (to *kill a man*) or who practice forbidden and unacceptable rites (to *break a dog's neck*, to *offer swine's blood*, to *bless an idol*), revealing a corrupt cultic life (cf. 65:3b-4; 11).

Scholars have interpreted v. 3 in two ways: either sacrifice itself in its entirety is being rejected as an appropriate means of worship (NRSV: *Whoever slaughters an ox is like one who...*, a translation which is not represented in the MT, since there is no *like* or other connective term in the text; so Watts, 1987, 356) or, condemnation of a cult that has been infected by syncretism, or whose participants are also involved in syncretistic cults unrelated to the temple worship (Westermann, 1969, 413-4; Whybray, 1975, 281-2; Emmerson, 1992, 84; Herbert, 1975, 191; Muilenburg, 1956, 761-762).

In my view, v. 3a α summarizes, in epigrammatic manner, the polemic against cultic observances without righteous behaviour (*he who slaughters an ox kills a man*); a similar polemic is found in Isa. 58:3-12 which is concerned with the radical reinterpretation of fasting in terms of moral behaviour and social justice, and in Isa. 1:10-20 (reinterpretation of sacrifices and customary cultic observances in terms of moral behaviour and social justice; see above on Isa. 58:1-59:20). The MT in Isa. 61:8a (reading *For I, YHWH, love justice, I hate robbery with burnt offering....*), is a hint at YHWH's opposition to the cultic observances (sacrifice) followed by unjust behaviour (*robbery*). Thus 61:8a is another possible parallel, added to the above-mentioned ones, to 66:3a α .

The condemnation of those who '*choose their own ways*' (66:3c) is found in Isa. 56:11 (of the leaders of Israel), 57:17 (Israel's iniquity consisted of violent acts for profit, that is, plunder stated in v. 17a, and of sexual cults and idolatrous rites described in 57:3-13a), 65:2 (practitioners of idolatrous rites described in 65:3a-5a), and 65:12 (idolatrous practices

described in 65:11) (Koenen, 1990, 193). In 66:3 those ‘*who have chosen their own ways*’ are those whose ‘*soul delights in their detested things*’. The reference in 66:3 is to the idolatry attacked in 65:11 (cf. Rofe, 1985, 211, n. 32)

YHWH’s announcement of their punishment in v. 4a (*I also will choose their wanton dealing and bring their terrors (things dreaded) upon them. Because, when I called, no one answered. When I spoke, they did not listen*) is identical with the announcement of idolaters’ punishment in 65:12aβ.b (*I will assign you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter. Because, I called, but no one answered, I spoke, but they did not listen, and they did what was evil in my eyes, and chose what did not please me, and 65:6-7*), (Whybray, 1975, 282; Koenen, 1990, 194).

Isaiah 66:5

שמעו דבר־יהוה החרדים אל־דברו
אמרו אחיכם שנאיכם מנדיכם למען שמי
יכבד יהוה ונראה בשמחתכם
והם יבשו:

Hear the word of YHWH, you who tremble at his word:

*Your brothers who hate you and thrust you away for my name’s sake have said,
‘Let YHWH be glorified so that we may see your joy’. But it is they who shall
feel shame.*

The form of v. 5 leads scholars to the suggestion that it is a separate unit not integrally related to the previous verses (Westermann, 1969, 415; Whybray, 1975, 282).

In v. 2 YHWH addresses Himself to the apostates and speaks about his servants, here He speaks to those ‘*who tremble at his word*’ about his servants’ opponents/the apostates (cf. Beuken, 1989a, 60). Despite the fact that the opponents are here described as ‘*brothers*’, the dualism on cultic grounds is clear (cf. 65:13-14), although the exact significance of the expression ‘*thrust away*’ is uncertain. It occurs only once elsewhere in the Old

Testament (Amos 6:3: *O you that put far away the evil day, and bring near a reign of violence*, where the meaning is ‘to refuse to think of it’). There is no evidence that the verb in 66:5 had already acquired the later technical sense of ‘excommunicate’ (Whybray, 1975, 282).

Westermann, commenting on the use of the word ‘*brothers*’ in this context which speaks so clearly of hostility, notes that although a cleavage is certainly beginning to appear within the community, it has not yet developed to such an extent that one can appropriately speak of “the parting of the ways between the two groups within the nation” (1969, 416-7).

The dualism is not between two parties (Zadokite priests in control of the cult and oppressed minority of visionaries, disciples of Second Isaiah, so Hanson’s view, 1975, 180-181) but between faithful and sinners on cultic grounds as in 65:1-7, 8-16a, 18-25 and 57:1-21.

Isaiah 66:6

קול שאון מעיר קול מהיכל
קול יהוה משלם גמול לאיביו:

*A sound of an uproar from the city, a voice from the temple,
the voice of YHWH, bringing retribution to his enemies.*

V. 6 depicts the ‘*uproar*’ of a battle in which YHWH is ‘*bringing retribution to his enemies*’. YHWH as warrior fights against his enemies in ‘*the city*’ [a hint at YHWH’s punishment of his adversaries-sinners (59:17b-18; cf. 1:19-20, 24-28) who cause violence, perversion of justice, and moral corruption (59:1-15a; cf. 1:15-17, 21-23)], and in ‘*the temple*’.

The temple, whether in ruins or not, is a literary device here for the place of worship. The eschatological hope for the cultic life in which YHWH intervenes to ‘*bring retribution to his enemies*’, that is, those who pervert His cult is recapitulated here. The hint at the polemic against idolatry (57:3-

13a; 65:3a-7, especially 65:6; cf. 66:3aβ.b-4, 6aβ, 17, 1:29-31) is apparent.

Isaiah 66:7-9

בטרם תחיל ילדה⁷

בטרם יבוא חבל לח והמליטה זכר:

מי-שמע כזאת מי ראה כאלה⁸

היוחל ארץ ביום אחד אם-יולד גוי פעם אחת

כי-חלה גם-ילדה ציון את-בניה:

האני אשביר ולא אוליד יאמר יהוה⁹

אם-אני המוליד ועצרתני אמר אלהיך:

(7) *Before she is in labour she gives birth.*

Before her pain comes on her, she delivers a son.

(8) *Whoever heard of such a thing? Whoever saw things like these?*

Can a land be in labour in one day, or a nation be born in one moment?

But Zion was in labour and already delivered her children.

(9) *Shall I bring to the birth and not cause(Zion) to deliver? says YHWH.*

If I am the one who begets, shall I hinder it? says your God.

Vv. 7-14 focus on the city and use birth and child imagery to describe the emergence of the new city. The eschatological hope for Zion/Jerusalem and her people detailed in Isaiah 60-62 is recapitulated here.

In vv. 7-8 the unexpectedness (*Before she is in labour*) and the speed (*Before her pain comes on her*) of the new age of salvation for the 'land' and the 'nation' (v. 8b) is expressed in the image of birth (*she gives birth,...she delivers a son*) and in a riddle form (Webster, 1986, 97).

The image of Zion as a mother, used to express the promise of the return of the dispersed Jews to their homeland is found in Isa. 60:4b, 9bα (cf. 49:18-23; 54:1-3, 13) (cf. Sawyer, 1989, 96-97). In 62:5 the returning people are presented with the image of 'sons' returning to their mother (here Zion as bride).

V. 8c gives the explication of the riddle in v. 7: the birth and the beginnings of the birth-pangs are simultaneous (*Zion was in labour and already delivered her children*), which implies that “the return of the dispersed Jews to their homeland will take place not gradually but immediately and in a single moment” (Whybray, 1975, 284).

In v. 9 YHWH, as the unique controller of the events, assures that he will bring the repopulation of Zion (*birth*) with the dispersed Jews to its completion. The similar theme of the repopulation of Zion by her people caused by YHWH’s saving intervention (62:2b, 4a.bα.cα, 5b, 7a, 8, 11) is found in Isa. 62:4bβ.cβ-5a, 10a.

Isaiah 66:10

שמחו את־ירושלם וגילו בה כל־אהביה

שישו אתה משוב כל־המתאבלים עליה:

Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her.

Exult with her in joy, all you who mourn over her,

The theme of joy-promised-to-those-who-mourn is recapitulated in vv. 10-11 and is found in the following passages:

a) Isa. 60:20: after the promise of the coming of the nations with their wealth (60:5b, 6ab.cα, 7, 9ab, 11bα, 13, 16), and of the rebuilding of Zion with precious metals (60:17ab), in righteousness (60:17a) and in security and peace from violent actions in the society (60:18), YHWH’s ceaseless protection and presence in Jerusalem (60:1β, 2b, 19ca, 20a.bα) causes the end of the *days of mourning* (60:20bβ).

b) In Isa. 61:2b-3ab, 7, 10, the end of mourning is a dominant note, after the sole initiative of YHWH’s intervention to effect righteousness (justice) in the community (61:2a, 3c, 8, 11), after the rebuilding of the city (61:4) and the restoration of her honour (61:9, 11), after the undertaking

of foreigners of Israel's manual work (61:5, 6), the possession of 'a double portion' in the land (61:7).

c) In Isa. 65:18-25 life in the new Jerusalem will be characterised by joy (v. 18), and the end of mourning (v. 19b).

Isaiah 66:11

למען תינקו ושבעתם משד תנחמיה

למען תמצו והתענגתם מזיז כבודה:

so that you may suck and be satisfied from her consoling breast,

so that you may drain out and take exquisite delight from the abundance of her glory.

In v. 11 Zion is the nursing-mother and her inhabitants are consoled (*you may suck and be satisfied with her consoling breast*) and 'take exquisite delight' in her prosperity (*the abundance of her glory*).

In 60:16 Zion is portrayed as an infant 'sucking the milk of the nations' and 'the breast of kings' (the wealth of the nations) (cf. 49:23).

Isaiah 66:12

כִּי־כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה

הֲנִי נֹטֶה־אֵלֶיהָ כְּנָהָר שְׁלוֹם

וּכְנָחַל שׁוֹטֵף כְּבוֹד גּוֹיִם

וַיִּנָּקְתֶּם עַל־צֶדֶד תִּנְשְׂאוּ וְעַל־בְּרָכִים תִּשְׁעֲשְׂעוּ:

For thus says YHWH:

Behold, I will extend prosperity unto her like a river,

and the wealth of nations like an overflowing stream,

and you shall suckle and be carried on her hip, and you shall be fondled on her knees.

Vv. 12-14 (introduced by the causative 'For', (Whybray, 1975, 285) present a picture of the life of eschatological Jerusalem in correspondence

with Isa. 60:5b, 6ab.cα, 7, 9ab, 11bα,.13, 16; 61:6b (*the wealth of the nations*).

The expression '*I will extend prosperity unto her like a river*' is found in Isa 48:18 (cf. Whybray, 1975, 285; Sekine, 1989, 50-51): *O that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your prosperity would have been like a river, and your success like the waves of the sea.*

The theme of the carrying of the children of Zion by nations (66:12d: *and you shall suckle and be carried on her hip, and you shall be fondled on her knees*) (cf. 60:4b).

Isaiah 66:13

כַּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אָמוּ תִנְחַמְנוּ כֵּן אֲנִכִּי אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם
[תִּנְחַמְנוּ:]

As a person whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

YHWH will '*comfort*' his people as the ultimate source of comfort (Watts, 1987, 363) (cf. Isa. 57:18; 61:2b-3ab, 12:1, 40:1, 49:13, 52:9: YHWH comforter of his people; 51:3, 12, 19: comforter of Zion).

Isaiah 66:14a

וּרְאִיתֶם וְשֵׁשׁ לְבַבְכֶּם וְעֲצְמוֹתֵיכֶם כִּדְשָׁא תִפְרַחְנָה ^{14a}

(14a) *And you will see, and your heart shall rejoice and your bones will flourish like the grass.*

V. 14a (*your bones will flourish like the grass*) is a promise of prosperity similar to the one in 58:11bα: *YHWH will...make your bones strong.*

Isaiah 66:14b-17

וְנוֹדַעַה יְד־יְהוָה אֶת־עַבְדִּיו וְזַעַם אֶת־אִיְבֹיו: ^{14b}

¹⁵ כִּי־חֲנָה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכִסּוּפָהּ מִרְכַּבְתִּיו

להשיב בחמה אפו וגערתו בלהבי-אש:

¹⁶ כי באש יהוה נשפט ובחרבו את-כל-בשר ורבו חללי יהוה:

¹⁷ המתקדשים והמטהרים אל-הגנות אחר אחד בתוך

אכלי בשר החזיר והשקץ והעכבר

יחדו יספו נאם-יהוה:

(14b) *And YHWH's hand shall be known upon his servants, and he will be indignant to his enemies.*

(15) *For behold, YHWH comes in fire and his chariots like the storm-wind, to bring back his anger in fury, and his rebuke in flames of fire.*

(16) *For YHWH will enter into controversy by fire and by his sword with all flesh and YHWH's slain shall be many.*

(17) *Those who sanctify and purify themselves in the gardens, after one in the middle,*

eating swine's flesh, and the detestation of the mice,

shall come to an end together, says YHWH.

Vv. 14b-17 (and 24) recapitulate the eschatological hope for YHWH's 'anger in fury, and...rebuke in flames of fire' and YHWH's 'controversy by fire and by his sword....' (vv. 15-16) on 'his enemies' (within Jerusalem, that is, sinners on ethical³⁴ and cultic (idolaters)³⁵ basis), and against 'all flesh'³⁶ (in contrast to Westermann who sees in vv. 14b-16 YHWH's punishment only of the nations in 66:16; 1969, 421).

Isaiah 66:18-24

¹⁸ ואנכי מעשיהם ומחשבתיהם באה לקבץ את-כל-הגוים

והלשנות ובאו וראו את-כבודי:

³⁴ v. 14bβ; cf. 1:24; 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20, 10:4; 59:18a; 66:3aα, 6aα.

³⁵ v. 17; cf. 1:28-31; 57:20-21; 65:3a-7, 11-12; 66:3aβ.b-4, 6aβ.

³⁶ v. 16; cf. 59:18b; 63:1-6; 34:2, 5-6; 24:1, 4-6, 21-23; 26:20-21; 27:1; 29:5-8, where the oracles against Assyria and Babylon (14:26-27; 10:5, 25; 13:9, 11, 13; 14:25; 30:27-28, 30-32; 42:13; 43:14; 49:25-26; 47:3; 52:10) are transformed into oracles against all the nations of the earth.

¹⁹ ושמתי בהם אות ושלחתי מהם

פליטים אל־הגוים תרשיש פול ולוד משכי קשת תבל ויון האיים
הרחקים אשר לא־שמעו את־שמעי ולא־ראו את־כבודי והגידו את־
כבודי בגוים:

²⁰ והביאו את־כל־אחיכם מכל־הגוים מנחה ליהוה
בסוסים וברכב ובצבים ובפרדים ובכרכרות על הר קדשי ירושלם
אמר יהוה כאשר יביאו בני ישראל את־המנחה בכלי טהור בית
יהוה:

²¹ וגם־מהם אקח לכהנים ללויים אמר יהוה:

²² כי כאשר השמים החדשים והארץ החדשה אשר אני עשה

עמדים לפני נאם־יהוה כן יעמד זרעכם ושמכם:

²³ והיה מדי־חדש בחדשו ומדי שבת בשבתו

יבוא כל־בשר להשתחות לפני אמר יהוה:

²⁴ ויצאו וראו בפגרי האנשים הפשעים בי

כי תולעתם לא תמות ואשם לא תכבה

והיו דראון לכל־בשר:

(18) *And I, despite their deeds and their thoughts, am coming^a to gather all
the nations*

and the languages, and they will come and see my glory.

(19) *For I will set a sign among them, and from them I will send*

*survivors to the nations: Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, the drawers of a bow, Tubal
and Greeks, the coastlands*

*afar away, that have not heard my tidings and those who have not seen my
glory. And they will make known my*

glory among the nations.

(20) *And they will bring all your brothers from all the nations as a grain
offering to YHWH*

*on horses and in chariots, and in litters and on mules, and on dromedaries, to
my holy mountain, Jerusalem,*

says YHWH, just as the Israelites bring the grain offering to the house of YHWH in a clean vessel.

(21) *And from them also I will take some for priests, for Levites, says YHWH.*

(22) *For (indeed) as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain(stand) before me, says (oracle of) YHWH, so your descendants and your name will remain/stand (before me).*

(23) *(And it will be) from new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all mankind will come to worship before me, says YHWH.*

(24) *And they will go out and look at the corpses of the men who have transgressed against me.*

For their worm will not die, their fire will not be quenched, and they will continue to be an abhorrence to all mankind.

Textual notes:

(18) ^a Read באה 'I came' with BHS as Qal active participle בא 'I am coming'.

Isa. 66:18-24 recapitulates the eschatological thought concerning the destiny of the nations: they will come to see YHWH's glory (v. 18b; cf. 2:2-3; 49:7; 55:5; 56:8; 60:3, 6c, 9c; 62:10c) and to worship before YHWH, from new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath (v. 23; cf. 56:7c; 60:7b), they will make known, like missionaries, His glory to distant lands (v. 19), they will be the means (clean vessels) of bringing scattered Israel home (v. 20; cf. 60:4b, 8-9ab; 14:2; 43:5b-6; 49:22-23), and some of these will participate even in the worship of YHWH as 'priests and Levites' (v. 21; cf. 56:3, 6-7ab) (cf. Davies, 1989, 105). In 66:24, however, the negative attitude towards all the sinners, that is, both Israel's and nations' sinners (cf. 59:18ab-19a) is recapitulated.

In v. 18 YHWH 'is coming' to Zion 'despite their deeds and their thoughts', that is, the practitioners of illegitimate cult practices (66:17) (Watts, 1987, 364).

V. 19ab (For (explicative waw) I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations) explains the manner in which the nations will

know of YHWH's *glory* (v. 18). The *sign* of YHWH and the sending of the *survivors* form the first phase of the gathering of the nations, and occur before their coming and seeing. "When YHWH assembles the peoples for the judgement, according to the expectations aroused by v. 16, he will give a sign that will make the nations attentive to his glory. He will not act punitively, but will offer escape and therefore send some '*survivors from them*' - not from the already executed, but from the suspended judgement - to the far away peoples, who '*have not heard*' of '*or seen*' Him. ...This sign, here "refers to YHWH's glory; it mediates knowledge of YHWH" (Beuken, 1991, 211).

In contrast to Beuken's view (1991, 211) that, in the present context this sign is that '*YHWH's hand shall be known upon his servants, and he will be indignant to his enemies*' (66:14), it can be argued that YHWH does not exhibit his glory only by '*bringing retribution to his enemies*' on ethical and cultic grounds (66:6, 17) but also by causing (not gradually but immediately and *in one moment*) the return of the dispersed Israel to their land (66:7-9), by making Zion a consolation to her people (66:10-11), by '*extending prosperity unto*' her and by means of '*the wealth of nations*' (66:12).

The expression '*survivors of the nations*' is found in Isa. 45:20: *Assemble yourselves and come together, draw near, you survivors of the nations* פְּלִיטֵי הַגּוֹיִם! *They have no knowledge - those who carry about their wooden idols, and keep on praying to a god that cannot save.*

As feature of the eschatological hope for the new order (v. 22: *new heavens and new earth*; cf. 65:17), either the nations' (cf. 56:5, though not addressed to proselytes but to the *eunuchs*), or the *descendants and name* of Israelites will be permanent (Whybray, 1975, 292), or both (since the context speaks of Israel's and nations' future).

The last structural unit ends with the same (as the previous anthologies do) polemical attitude towards all those '*who transgress against*' YHWH (the

ungodly ones of the nations included) (cf. 57:20-21; 59:18-20; 63:1-6; 65:25).

In 66:24 they are portrayed, after their destruction by YHWH, as dead ‘corpses’ (cf. 34:3: of the nations’ *corpses*) whose ‘worm will not die’ and whose ‘fire will not be quenched’ and being ‘an abhorrence to all mankind’. Isa. 66:24 recapitulates the theme of the punishment of the sinners/enemies of YHWH, that is, both Israel’s and nations’ sinners (cf. 59:18ab-19a).

Isa. 66:1-24 is a concluding eschatology, a conflation of eschatological hopes described in the previous structural units of Isa. 56-66.

It recapitulates the following themes:

- a) ~ reinterpretation of the nature of YHWH’s dwelling-place (66:1-2: the transcendent creator, YHWH dwells with the *humble and contrite in spirit, who trembles at His word*; cf. 57:15).
- ~ reinterpretation of the nature of worship: i) 66:3aα: polemic against cultic observances without righteous behaviour (cf. 56:2; 58:3-12, 13; 1:10-20; 61:8?). ii) 66:3aβ.b-4, 6aβ: cultic impurity is condemned (cf. 57:3-13a; 65:1-7, 11; 1:29-31). iii) 66:4-5: dualism between faithful and sinners on cultic basis (57:13a.b.c-21; 65:1-7, 8-16a, 18-25).
- b) YHWH as warrior fights against his enemies for ethical (66:3aα, 6aα, 14b; cf. 59:17b-18a; 1:19-20, 24; 5:25; 9:11, 16, 20, 10:4) and cultic (66:3aβ.b-4, 6aβ, 14b, 17) failings, and against ‘*all flesh*’ (66:16, 24; cf. 59:18b; 63:1-6; 34:2, 5-6; 24:1, 4-6, 21-23; 26:20-21; 27:1; 29:5-8).
- c) The return of the dispersed Israel to Zion and her repopulation (66:7-9; cf. 60:4b, 9bα, 62:4-5, 14:2; 49:18-23, 54:1-3, 13).
- d) Joy to those who mourn (66:10-11; cf. 60:20, 61:2b-3ab, 7, 10; 65:13dα, 14a, 18, 19b; 40:1; 49:13).
- e) The wealth of the nations is coming to Zion (66:12c; cf. 60:5b, 6ab.cα, 7, 9ab, 11bα, 13, 16; 61:6b).
- f) YHWH will comfort his people (66:13; cf. 57:18; 61:2b-3ab; 12:1; 40:1; 49:13; 52:9; 51:3, 12, 19).

g) The destiny of the nations: they *will come to see* YHWH's *glory* (66:18b; cf. 49:7; 55:5; 60:3, 6c, 9c; 62:10c) and *to worship before* YHWH (66:23; cf. 56:7c; 60:7b, 8; 2:2-3), they will bring the scattered Israel in Zion (66:20; cf. 60:4b, 9a.b α ; 43:5b-6; 49:22-23), and they will participate in the worship of YHWH as '*priests and Levites*' (66:21; cf. 56:3, 6-7ab).

Isa. 66:24 recapitulates the negative attitude towards all the enemies of YHWH, that is, both Israel's and nations' sinners (cf. 59:18ab-19a).

Wisdom themes in 66:1-24:

- Reinterpretation in terms of righteous behaviour of the nature of an institution (66:1-2: temple) and of a cultic action (66:3a α : sacrifice).
- Ethical dualism: punishment for the sinners on moral basis (66:6a α , 14b β , 16, 24) and on cultic grounds (66:3a β .b-4, 5, 6a β , 17), salvation for the righteous (66:5, 7-14a.b α).

CONCLUSIONS

This study began by questioning Hanson's view that Isaiah 56-66 is an early apocalyptic work for two reasons: a) its eschatology is an apocalyptic eschatology which reflects an inner-community conflict (in the period of the Second Temple between visionary and hierocratic elements); b) its eschatology, being contrasted with the eschatology found in the OT prophetic writings, is pessimistic and concerned with an other-worldly order which will be fulfilled outside history.

The comparison of the material in Isaiah 56-66 with the material found in the apocalyptic works showed that Isaiah 56-66 shares with the apocalyptic literature common eschatological beliefs and like the apocalypses it is the product of the tendency towards the reinterpretation of scripture. Since eschatology hardly characterizes the variety of the concerns of the apocalypses which are not only the revelation of the mysteries of the future, but also of the past, the heavenly world, and the earth, and since the literary form of Isaiah 56-66 does not fit that of an apocalypse, Isaiah 56-66 is not an apocalypse but it is apocalyptic in outlook.

This study proceeded to argue that Isaiah 56-66 is a coherent composition, a pseudepigraphic anthology (collection) of expectations for the future by a scribe (redactor) who adopted the language of the First and Second Isaiah and the language of wisdom and using mantological exegesis (and, to a lesser extent, aggadic exegesis) transformed them into the transcendental eschatology found in some of the apocalypses. He included the version of his two predecessors with his own (Isaiah 56-66) and he added Isa. 1 and Isa. 34-35 to bind them together¹.

¹ H.G.M. Williamson, recently, argued a similar proposal for Second Isaiah, namely that Second Isaiah "was especially influenced by the literary deposit of Isaiah of Jerusalem, and that in order to locate his message in relation to the earlier and continuing ways of YHWH with Israel he included a version of the earlier prophecies" (apart from 24-27) "with his own" (40-55) "and edited them", adding 2:5; 5:30; 8:23(9:1a); 13-14; 30:18; 33, in order "to bind the two parts of the work together" (1994, 240-241).

In the Introduction I made clear that I do not search for an “influence” of wisdom on the apocalyptic or the prophetic works but of a usage of wisdom language by them. The criterion for the presence of sapiential material in Isaiah 56-66 is the usage of typical wisdom themes such as:

a) ethical dualism:

i) On moral grounds (punishment of the wicked - vindication of the righteous) (Gammie, 1974, 372-385): Isa. 59:15b-20 (cf. 1:19-20, 24-25); 60:1-63:6², 66:14b β , 6a α , 21.

ii) On cultic grounds (destruction of wicked-idolaters: 57:13a.b, 20-21; 65:6-7, 11-12, 13-14, 15a β , 25b; 66:3a β .b-4, 5, 6ab, 17, and salvation for the faithful: 57:13c, 18, 19; 65:8-10, 13-14, 15b, 16a, 18-24, 25a.c; 66:5, 7-14a.b α);

b) the principle of retribution;

c) the attack upon laziness;

d) the attack upon drunken leaders;

e) ethical actions are given a higher value than cultic actions [Isa. 56:2, 58:13: sabbath; 61:8 (MT), 66:3a α (cf. 1:10-11): sacrifice; 58:3-12: fasting; 57:15, 66:1-2: YHWH's dwelling place is with the *contrite and humble in spirit, who tremble at YHWH's word*];

f) ‘death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life’.

Apart from the ethical dualism and the theme ‘the death of the righteous is a release from the bleak conditions of life’, the rest of the themes do not belong exclusively to the wisdom literature. But it is essential to stress that in spite of the use of themes popular in wisdom circles, Isaiah 56-66 introduces a nuance alien to wisdom, namely, the eschatological nuance. There are also a few linguistic affinities with the wisdom literature, such as the blessing formula *אשרי אנוש יעשה-זאת* (although this is not exclusive to wisdom), the expression ‘*the pointing of the finger*’ (it is found

² In Isa. 60:1-63:6 the distinctive advance beyond the ethical dualism between groups of men within Israel, that is, the ethical dualism with ethnic character occurs; the contrast is between the righteous Israel (60:21; 61:3c, 6a; 62:12a) and the (ungodly) nations (60:11b-12, 14; 61:5; 63:1-6) (cf. Wisdom of Solomon) (Gammie, 1974, 376-377).

only in Prov. 6:13 and Isa. 58:9b in the Old Testament), the word מִצָּח *'contention'* (only in Prov. 13:10, 17:19 and Isa. 58:4), and the expression יוֹם נִקְם *'day of vengeance'* (only in Prov. 6:34 and Isa. 34:8, 61:2, 63:4).

The grounds (as they have been described by M. Fishbane) for arguing that Isaiah 56-66 is a piece of mantological exegesis are a learned preoccupation with older prophetic language from First and Second Isaiah and other texts of the Old Testament, inner-textual exegesis, pseudepigraphy, *ex eventu* prophecy, play on words, anthologies.

Typologies (Isa. 65:17: typology of a cosmological nature; Isa. 63:7-14: typology of a historical nature) are the grounds for arguing that Isaiah 56-66 uses aggadic exegesis. Isa. 58:3-10a is an aggadic exegesis of a legal traditum (Lev. 16 and 23:24-32).

As far as concerns the technique of anthologizing Fishbane implies that certain kinds of anthologizing are characteristic of mantological exegesis. He suggests a comparison between Amos 7-8, Zechariah 1-6, Zechariah 9-12, and Daniel 7-12 where a series of conventionally formulated or reformulated vision-reports with exegesis are anthologically grouped in one document. Fishbane does not, however, elaborate upon what thematic or stylistic associative principles might be used in gathering mantological anthologies. K. Larkin (1994, 221-247) has offered a brief comparison between Amos 7-8, Zechariah 1-6, 9-13, and Daniel 7-12 which indicates that there is important evidence of continuity and one can speak of each being an example of an identifiable type of mantological anthology.

These structural and thematic correspondences are not found in Isaiah 56-66. However, mantological exegesis of older prophecy (like Zechariah 9-13) and a different structural pattern which also indicates strong wisdom concerns are recognizable in these chapters. The structural plan which has dominated the study of the structure of Isa. 56-66 is the concentric structure that has been proposed by Westermann. In the Introduction I provided a possible delimitation of the units in Isaiah 56-

66 based not on a traditio-historical approach but on a literary level (rhetorical devices of inclusio, keywords and repetition, and the literary device of antithesis). Isaiah 56-66 is one anthology with a recurring pattern of certain themes. It is divided into five structural units: 1. 56:1-57:21; 2. 58:1-59:21; 3. 60:1-63:6; 4. 63:7-65:25; 5. 66:1-24 (the concluding unit which recapitulates the themes of the previous ones).

To say that Isaiah 56-66 is the product of the learned study of the scripture by a scribe who reuses the language of First and Second Isaiah and other texts of the Old Testament (including the language of wisdom) is not to undervalue the distinctive message and language of these chapters. In the Introduction I gathered and highlighted unique elements in thought and language in Isaiah 56-66.

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